DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

"Playing in a House of Mirrors"
Exploring the Six-Part-Story Method as Embodied 'Reflexion'

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“Playing in a House of Mirrors”: Exploring the Six-Part-Story Method as Embodied ‘Reflexion’

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DEDICATION

To Jack and Steve. I think you would be proud.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Normally it is difficult to know where to begin with acknowledgements but this time, it is very easy. To my first supervisor, Professor Divya Jindal-Snape, I owe a huge debt of gratitude for steering me through very troubled times and for never flinching in her belief I would get to the end – a Storyteller of note! Thanks also to Professor David Miller who guided my thoughts during the formative stages of my research. To my great friend and colleague Dr Warren Linds; thank you for your wisdom, time and enthusiasm for this methodology – lots more collaboration to come I think! Thanks also must go to Dr Jan Pascal; she turned my thoughts around at just the right time, I couldn't have finished this without that. To my great friend and colleague Dr Linda Walker, thank you for walking part of the journey with me. I also want to acknowledge the courage and commitment of the participants in my study; thank you for staying the course and for making the process a rich and deep learning experience. I also want to acknowledge the help of Hazel Terry in the production of the image cards used (www.hazelterry.com).

Finally, I want to acknowledge the patience, love (and help) of my husband, Peter; I can't promise this will be the last one but I can promise the next one will be easier!

DECLARATIONS

The following thesis is based on the results of investigation carried out by me, it is my own composition, and has not previously been presented for any degree. Unless otherwise stated, I have consulted all references cited. The research was carried out under the supervision of Professor Divya Jindal-Snape.

(Signed by candidate)

The conditions of the relevant Ordinance and Regulations have been fulfilled.

(Signed by the supervisor)

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study considers the way in which the 6-Part-Story-Method (6PSM) process, drawn from the field of Dramatherapy, can be used to explore, interpret and enhance the professional practice of those working in the broad context of education. Evolving from social constructivist/constructionist and relativist perspectives, the study explores the concepts of reflection, critical reflection and reflexivity as socially constructed acts. This was a longitudinal study consisting of two stages; Stage 1 involved a number of practical sessions exploring the 6PSM model with Image Theatre techniques over the period of a year. Stage 2 involved an evaluative session a year after the cessation of Stage 1. There were four participants in the study all of whom work within the broad education sector.

The place of story creation, telling, listening and sharing is discussed as a core way of individuals and groups making sense of their experiences. In particular, the 6PSM process is used to provide a structural and theoretical base to the methodological process undertaken in the study, and as the key component in the development of embodied reflexive practice. Furthermore, connections are made to the development of embodied, reflexive learning experiences created by techniques adapted from the theory and practice of both Image Theatre and Dramatherapy.

Results from the study suggest that the use of the 6PSM as a vehicle for embodied and reflexive learning may be a viable and valuable creative process for educational practitioners to engage with. Further, the results have led to the connection of story, reflexivity and applied theatre to produce a 3-dimensional model of embodied and reflexive practice that has 6PSM at its core. Implications from the research relate to organisational policy changes to incorporate opportunities for the development of 6PSM processes within groups, and changes to initial training for practitioners within the caring professions to incorporate the model of embodied, reflexive practice using 6PSM

CHAPTER ONE -
SETTING THE SCENE: AIMS, CONTEXT AND STUDY OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

At the heart of this journey lies the concept of education as the practice of freedom (hooks, 1994). These words have resonated with me throughout the last twenty years or so as I've traipsed across the landscape of learning about learning, and also learning about teaching. Fundamental to that process has been the unpacking and repacking of my cognitive 'luggage'; a task that has generated joy in finding new ways of understanding, new knowledge and ideas and the sharing of personal and professional 'truths'. It has also often generated the discomfort hooks (1994) refers to when she highlights that giving up existing understanding can often bring some degree of pain. Having to move away from well established and internally deeply held beliefs, particularly when they have informed or are core to one's practice, can be an extremely challenging and uncomfortable action to take. Like Vesaas's (2003) character in his fictional text, *The Boat in the Evening*, one can find pain and confusion in looking inward through a metaphorical mirror:

> *"He cannot distinguish one thing from another, what is down or what is up. The mirrors have done this to him…….He does not know that it is his own power of allurement and seduction that is facing him from the head in the water. He watches it like a stranger, or a distant, kind friend*." (pp.70-71)

In rich and deep reflection, it is often possible to lose yourself in the turmoil that can unfold through the uncovering of self-knowledge; that has certainly been the case at times during this doctoral process. However, at the heart has remained a desire to understand how we make sense of our experiences

through both thinking and feeling them, and how story creating/telling/listening/sharing can impact that sense making process.

1.2 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis has been organised into five chapters and a concluding Epilogue, which although discrete, connect together to be read as a whole. The chapters are explained as follows:

- **Chapter 1** – introduces the study, setting out the aims and objectives as well as providing the reader with an insight into the background and motivations for the study, and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks chosen.
- **The Journey Begins –** a reflective/reflexive story based on the methodology under investigation in this study forms a narrative bridge between Chapter 1 and the literature review in Chapter 2.
- **Chapter 2** – reviews the literature that has informed the study, examining what is already known about the key concepts under discussion. It explores the concepts of reflection, reflexivity and embodiment and looks at synergies between the processes that enable experiences to be understood. Story structure and purpose are considered in relation to narrative. Therapeutic story creating/telling/listening is also examined as a reflexive process, linking to the development of the particular story creation method focused on in the main study, the 6-Part-Story-Method. Research and literature about the 6PSM is also considered.
- **Chapter 3** – explores the methodological framework behind the study, connecting with the epistemological and ontological perspectives from which the study has evolved. The chapter also sets out the sampling process, research design, data collection and analysis as well examining issues of rigour and verification.
- **Chapter 4** – presents the empirical results and discussion. Each theme is summarised in order to pull together ideas within.
- **Chapter 5** – presents the conclusions and implications of the study, drawing together a general discussion at the beginning of the chapter

that summarises the key results from the study. Following that discussion, implications for policy and practice are considered, followed by future research possibilities.

- **Epilogue – Reflexions on my Journey –** A final reflective and reflexive 6-Part-Story is offered as a way of reviewing the doctoral journey from my perspective.

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The motivation for this study evolved from my own experience and practice as an educationalist, applied theatre practitioner, emerging researcher and curious individual. I began my teacher training in the early 1990s where I came to recognise internal reflection as a key element of professional practice. I became used to the 'plan-do-review' process of reflection based on the work of reflective practitioners such as Gibbs (1988), Kolb (1984) and Schön (1983, 1987), but, as Boud (2010) and Fook (2010) acknowledge, the cycle seemed to offer a superficial level of understanding of practice and I wanted to dig deeper into learning and teaching.

At the same time as beginning my teacher training, I became significantly involved in two other professional fields; Dramatherapy (I became the Scottish Link Person for the British Association of Dramatherapists, an office I held for five years), and Applied Theatre, very particularly the work of director, playwright and activist, Augusto Boal (1979). Having always had a passion for what I believed was the power of drama to create opportunities for learning, my involvement in theatre and drama work became focused on the therapeutic use of theatre and drama within a formalised classroom context, and as my training came to an end, I began to consider how therapeutic drama processes enabled me as a practicing teacher to develop a much richer and deeper understanding of my own practice. I wrote about my growing understanding of the professional field of Dramatherapy to make sense of my new learning (Vettraino, 1997, 1998).

As I progressed through my teaching career, working first in the primary education sector and then the university sector within a faculty of education, my reflective practice continued to be built upon creative approaches to

evaluation; widening both mine and my students' perspectives on the teaching and learning process. The use of a form of artistic lens (Sutherland, 2012) through which to view interactions was by no means unique to my reflective 'tool kit'. Indeed, reflective practitioner theorists such as Gillian Bolton (2010) have discussed the importance of having an aesthetic space in which to play with reality so that we can look at our behaviours and actions in a way that enables us to extend our own understanding of ourselves.

Working as Head of Expressive Arts, and Convenor of Practice and Placements for the teacher education provision at a large university in Scotland, I found myself wrestling with a number of challenging and contradictory ideas about the direction of teaching and learning. It was at this point that I drew on my experiences of a story creating/telling mechanism that originated in the field of Dramatherapy, and that I was first introduced to in the mid 1990s; the 6-Part-StoryMethod (6PSM) (for example, Lahad, 1992, 1993). This model is described in detail in Chapter 2 (see section 2.13) suffice it to say here that the model enables the individual to create a fictional or mythical story that can be based on their own experiences and through the creation of the story, the individual becomes aware of their motivations, strategies for coping, and thought process. It is here that I introduce the terms reflection and reflexivity. As I discuss later in this thesis, put simplistically, reflection is the act of looking back at what has occurred and drawing understanding from it. Reflexivity is the art and action of bending back (Steier, 1991) in the moment of action to create deeper, transformational learning. I also extend the use of 'reflexion' to encompass this deeper learning in action. The model in Chapter 2 discussed above is is essentially a reflexive and reflective act; the former because as the story is being written, the experiences are being retold and reframed, the latter because the individual revisits and reviews the story at the end to see what learning can be gained.

As a way of understanding the issues I was dealing with, I began creating 6 part stories, the fictional nature of which gave me a degree of distance from which to view my experiences. In my role at the university, I was frequently approached by external organisations to do developmental work with their

teams using the Boalian methods that I was working with (Boal, 1995, 2003). One of these teams approached me to work with them specifically on developing a form of reflective practice that would move them from talking through practice to physically working it through. At this point, another motivation for this study emerged as I struggled to find processes that enabled this form of story creating/telling/listening/sharing and embodied, reflexive learning to occur.

I captured the experience of using the 6PSM model in this embodied and reflexive way through a publication (Linds & Vettraino, 2008). Since then, I have had a number of other professional roles – as Head of Creative and Performing Arts at a large college in Scotland, currently as Head of Business and Enterprise at a university in England and also, since 2014, as Director of my own consultancy, Active Imagining (www.active-imagining.co.uk) . Since my initial foray into Lahad's (1992, 1993) and Ayalon's (for example, 2013) work, I have continued to develop my understanding and use of this model in different fields and contexts. When I decided to invest in this doctoral process, I wanted to recognise and learn from research and publications that I had already completed and for this reason I opted to submit a claim for recognition of prior learning (APEL) for 2.5 modules of the DEd Psychology programme (a copy of the acceptance email is included as Appendix A). The following section helps to bridge this previous work with my current thesis.

1.4 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARING – BRIDGING THE GAP

The following papers are submitted as Appendices B, C and D respectively and as my claim for recognition of prior learning.

Jindal-Snape, D. & Vettraino, E. (2007). Drama techniques for enhancement of social-emotional development in people with special needs: Review of research. International Journal of Special Education, 22(1), p.107-117

- This paper was a systematic review of literature that considered the robustness of research methods employed to explore the effectiveness of drama for people with special educational needs. We identified in this paper that, while drama appeared to be a valuable

tool for enabling the social and emotional development of individuals with special needs, there was a lack of robust research processes in place to evidence this effectively.

Linds, W. & Vettraino, E. (2008). Collective Imagining: Collaborative storytelling through Image Theater [sic], [54 paragraphs], Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 9(2), Art, 56. Retrieved from http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0802568

- This paper explores the work mentioned earlier, carried out with educational practitioners who supported children's learning in a range of school environments, and who wanted to reflect on (and reflex in) their practice. The resulting paper explores the act of writing as a socially constructed process where learning developed is relational and also spiral in construct. This paper offered the opportunity to consider how the 6PSM might be employed in the context of professional reflection and 'reflexion', a term I have coined to explain the reflexive action process. It was from this that my doctoral study developed.

Jindal-Snape, D., Vettraino, E., Lowson, A. & McDuff, W. (2011). Using creative drama to facilitate primary-secondary transition, Education 3-13, 39(4), p.383-394

- The focus in this paper explored the benefits of using drama techniques to allay anxiety and create a smoother and less fraught experience for those experiencing transitions between primary and secondary schools.

The combination of the areas of study in the three papers submitted above for recognition of prior learning (APEL claim) contributed to the foundations of my doctoral work.

Reflecting on each of the papers submitted for this thesis, the first paper enabled me to develop the ability to systematically review literature for a given purpose; a skill that I have further developed in my doctoral study. The

work explored in my collaborative paper with Linds (Linds & Vettraino, 2008) served as an informal pilot for the doctoral study and gave me considerable food for thought. The final paper enabled me to consider my doctoral research in relation to the process of transitioning between life events with a broader experiential lens which I then applied to the doctoral work. I also wanted to further develop the concept of exploring self through the distance created by characterisation and fictional storytelling, offering a safe space in which to explore transitional moments.

What has emerged from my previous, and continuing work (for example, Vettraino, 2010; Vettraino, Linds & Goulet, 2013; Vettraino, 2015) is a focus on the development of embodied reflexivity through applied theatre practice and thus the focus for this doctoral study is a natural progression. In addition, another motivation was to add to the comparatively small body of research that exists relating to 6PSM and to move our understanding of this technique beyond that of diagnostic tool within the field of Dramatherapy practice. This helps to address the call for more investigation into this method made by Dent-Brown (2001a) and by Leykin (2013). In my doctoral work, I have taken 6PSM out of the field of Dramatherapy and have used it to facilitate embodied reflexivity in the field of education. The doctoral work has enabled me to inform my practice with research, creating richer and deeper learning.

1.5 AIM OF THE DOCTORAL STUDY

The overarching research question for this study was:

> In what ways can the 6PSM be used within the broad context of education, to explore, interpret and enhance professionals' embodied meaning making processes in order to effect change in their professional practice?

The study is based on the assumptions that:

- Practitioners and professionals within the caring professions, and education in particular, have a mandate for reflecting critically on their

practice in order to develop (for example, Boud, 2006, 2010; Fook, 2002, 2010; Schön, 1983, 1987)

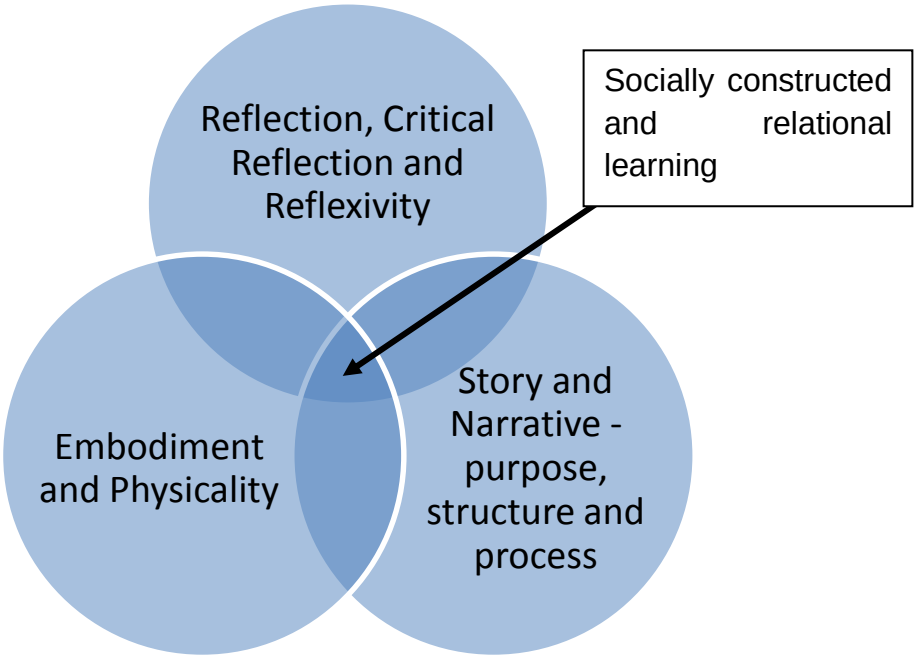
- People tell stories as a natural and fundamental part of living (for example, Gersie, 1990, 2003a; Gotschall, 2013), about their experiences; they make sense of their lives through the stories they tell and hear;
- Learning is a social construct, where understanding and knowledge are created through relational connections (for example, Boje, 2001; Fook, 2010; Keevers & Treleavan, 2011)

My epistemological and ontological perspectives are explored further in the following section.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

There are three broad, conceptual foci for this study shown by the diagram below:

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Foci



At the intersection of these three conceptual frameworks is the possibility for socially constructed and relational learning. My epistemological perspective situates my research within a social constructionist/constructivist paradigm. As explored later in Chapter 3, social constructionism and constructivism, whilst clearly linked, are not the same. In this thesis, I have connected them through the use of parentheses, ie: social construct(ionism/ivism). This assumes a relativist ontology in that I believe that knowledge is constructed through understanding the connectivity between and among individuals who create experiences because of and through their interactions with others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Robson, 2002).

In keeping with this view point, this study situates the concepts of reflection, critical reflection and reflexivity as being a social act (Cunliffe, 2002, 2004; Fook, 2002; Fook & Gardner, 2010), underpinned by connections made with others. In particular, reflexive experiences are created socially with others through the creation and sharing of stories, in and of oneself. These stories can accumulate and be drawn together as narratives that speak to the wider community. The act of creating and sharing a story with another informs a cognitive and affective process which engages both body and mind in order to bring about new knowledge and understanding (for example, Fels, 2009, 2015; Linds, 2008; Linds & Vettraino, 2008).

Stories are therefore the vehicles through which we come to terms with the world. We bring our understanding of situations together with others, effectively bootstrapping – looping our existing understanding of experiences onto the analogies offered by others to create new knowledge - new experiences onto the ones we have already banked to take our learning further (Gentner, 2010; Kurtz, Miao & Gentner, 2001).

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

As stories are the vehicle through which we understand the world, I offer a six-part-story, constructed as a way of reflecting and 'reflexing' on the experience of beginning the doctoral journey. The second part of this story is offered in the Epilogue to conclude the thesis.

AN EMERGING STORYTELLER – PART I

There was once a Collector of stories, so the story goes, who liked nothing more than to pass the time of day with others, listening as they told their tales. She revelled in the hopes and dreams, ideas and actions of these Storytellers and often wondered if they knew how their stories would stay with a person long after the telling.

Indeed, she wondered if they knew how their stories would affect the lives of those who heard them or shared them, and that led her to wonder:

"What is the story I would tell?"

Her head full of ideas, she spent many nights pondering on this question, as it was in the night time that she felt most alive. Sometimes she would speak about it with friends who smiled and nodded, but she felt that they were not really interested. So, she decided that she would go and see Wise Counsel who lived in a far away

room, on top of a mountain. The journey was not difficult but once she was there, she found Wise Counsel would not see her.

"You are not a Storyteller and therefore I cannot see you", Wise Counsel would say.

But the Collector persisted:

"Wise Counsel, I am not a Storyteller but I have stories that I really think you should hear."

Eventually, Wise Counsel relented and the Collector brought her stories to his table. Wise Counsel rooted through her bric-a-brac collection of stories with some admiration.

"You have collected many good stories", Wise Counsel said. "You even have some gems hidden amongst them, if you can root them out. What do you plan to do with them?"

"Well, I have gathered them together so now I'm going to tell them!" announced the Collector.

"Tell them?" replied Wise Counsel, "you cannot tell them, you are not a Storyteller! You are a Story Collector. It takes great skill to be a Storyteller; I do not think you have this skill and so it is better that you improve on what you are doing rather than try to be something you are not."

The Collector left Wise Counsel, dejected, carrying her bag of stories with her. She went back to her home and sat alone.

Time passed, and the Storytellers whom the Collector had previously listened to began to notice that she was not coming to listen to them anymore.

"I wonder what has happened to her?" they would say. "She used to be here all the time, listening to us, asking us questions, sharing her thoughts."

One day, a very experienced Storyteller went to visit the Collector.

"You have stopped coming to listen to our stories. We have missed you, somehow it is not the same", said the Storyteller.

The Collector sat across from the Storyteller and began to explain.

"I am sorry for not coming to hear your stories. They are all really interesting and I enjoy them a great deal but I feel it would be too sad for me to come and sit with you now."

"Why?" asked the Storyteller.

The Collector took a deep breath in and then said, "because I want to be a Storyteller too, but Wise Counsel told me that I am not skilled enough to tell stories and that I should stick with collecting them instead."

The Storyteller was surprised, and then a little angry. "What rubbish!" she said, "of course you can be a Storyteller, you just need to learn how. It is a tricky and difficult journey but if you are of stout heart and strong belief, you can do it."

Cheered by this, the Collector asked: "but how do I begin?!"

"Meet me at midnight at the Tower in the village and I will show you how to begin your journey." Said the Storyteller, and with that she bid farewell and left.

When it was time, excited to begin her journey, the Collector rushed to the Tower in the village where she found the Storyteller waiting with a key. Out of breath from running, the Collector watched as the Storyteller opened the Tower door and led her inside, where she saw a ladder propped up against the far wall.

"This is where you begin, Collector," said the Storyteller, "this ladder will take you high up into the Tower and beyond. As you climb the ladder you will face many things you have to conquer; fear of falling, lack of belief that you will reach the top, and much confusion. Whatever happens, keep going. You <u>will</u> reach the end of the ladder eventually."

And with that the Storyteller moved back to allow the Collector to begin the journey.

Her foot on the first rung, the Collector began to climb.

CHAPTER TWO -
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores a number of different theoretical bases which are connected to the context of this study. Fundamental areas of concern for this review are situated in the field of professional reflective practice, including critical reflection, reflexivity and embodied reflexive practice. In addition, narrative and storytelling processes are heuristically explored in connection with reflexivity and a key process under review in this thesis – the Six Part Story Method (also referred to in this thesis as 6PSM) – is also examined. The 6PSM originates in the professional field of Dramatherapy, however for this study the focus of the research is directed towards its potential use as a tool for reflective practice.

The overall aim of this review is to explore the role of the 6PSM in the creation of stories that, when told, shared, explored and enacted, can provide opportunities for new self-knowledge to the creator, teller and listener. To further explore this overall aim, objectives for the review have been detailed below providing a map through which the reader can follow the development of the theoretical story.

2.1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW OUTCOMES

- To explore definitions and experiences of reflection, reflexivity and embodiment as part of professionals' development, defining an epistemological paradigm for the research;
- To explore definitions of 'story' and 'narrative' in the context of story creation, storytelling and hearing stories, and through a reflective lens consider the therapeutic relationship between these processes and the development of self-knowledge;
- To define the 6PSM process and map its journey through dramatherapeutic practices to its potential for embodied reflexive process development.

2.1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW – SCOPE AND METHOD

The focus on reflection, reflexivity and embodied reflexivity spanned a variety of professional disciplines. Research and literature from health and social care, and education contexts was reviewed as reflective practice is particularly prominent in these fields. However, as there has been considerable work emerging in the last three decades from the field of leadership and management, there was equal regard given to this area. The arts, in particular movement, dance and drama and theatre practice, were also considered. In relation to storytelling, narrative and metaphor, the focus for review was on work written in English and (not exclusively) within the context of reflection and reflective practice and/or therapeutic practice, notably the field of Dramatherapy.

The sources of material included books, professional periodicals and journal articles – both peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed – and initially searches dated from 1995 onwards, apart from 6PSM as the earliest known publication of this process was in 1992 (Lahad, 1992) and limited amount of research is available. Although initially these constraints were applied to the dates of publications in order to keep the literature both manageable in terms of quantity, and contemporary, on reflection and as a result of the partially inductive process, I realised that some influential sources underpinning the development of some of the concepts under study – notably in relation to reflexive practice and storytelling processes – pre-dated the parameters I had set. As a result, I opted for no constraints and instead considered any literature based on its appropriateness to the broader concept under discussion.

Dialog and ProQuest were used to access the British Education Index (BEI), ERIC and SCOPUS in order to ensure maximum coverage and cross referencing in relation to the literature returned. In addition, any text that I accessed was also used to provide a bibliography which I was then able to follow up, either through the previously mentioned search methods or through the use of Google Scholar and internet book sellers such as Amazon, Google Play, Peter Owen Publishers and the American Booksellers Association.

The review process itself was semi-systematic. I began the process with a focus on the work of Mooli Lahad and Ofra Ayalon and the 6PSM (Lahad, 1992) because my interest in this process sparked the original idea for this doctoral research. From that I was led towards storytelling in general, narrative and the use of these in reflective processes in a range of contexts including the caring professions ie: health care, education, and management learning. It also evolved through a partial inductive process; as new knowledge was gained through my research, new directions formed and the literature review grew organically in that respect. However, there was a structure to this process which began with three main areas, rooted in the 6PSM, storytelling and narrative, and reflective practice.

2.1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

As the focus for this study is on the process of reflection and the use of storytelling as a method of accessing reflexive capacity, the structure of the review has been developed to reflect the journey from reflection, critical reflection, reflexivity and embodied reflexive practices, through storytelling and narrative as it relates to reflexivity and then into physical manifestation of story centred in dramatherapeutic and dramaturgical (the theory and practice of writing for drama and/or theatre) practices.

Reflection, critical reflection, reflexivity and embodied reflexive practices are explored in the beginning of the review, with a particular focus on the use of reflection as a learning experience, the experiences of embodied reflection and the link with these theories and performative inquiry. This then leads to a focus on narrative, storytelling and the development of story structure and story archetypes. Connected to this is the work of dramatherapists using complex story and role archetypes as vehicles for understanding self and others. Following on from this discussion, the 6PSM is then explored through its connection to both the literature around storytelling and also the methodology used as part of the format for the research itself.

2.2 THE LEXICON OF REFLECTION

The modern concepts of reflection and reflective practice have their roots in relatively recent work carried out by theorists and practitioners involved in

the development of education and training in the 1980s predominantly for those in the caring professions (ie: social work, health care and education) with the main exponent at that time being Donald Schön. Drawing on Dewey's theory of inquiry (1916, 1938) and the concept of learning by doing, Schön advocated a process of individualised reflection in and on action (1983, 1987).

In the early 1980s, the rise of globalism, internationalisation and a more managerialist approach to leading within professional sectors led to a concentrated period of professional development in which Schön's work on reflection and reflective practice theory, process and activities or tools entered the spotlight (Fook, 2010; Fook & Gardner, 2007; Frost, 2010). Schön's concept of reflection was as an individual activity that would enable the developing professional teacher, social worker, health care worker to engage in life-long learning practice, involving processes of introspection and evaluation (Fook & Gardner, 2007). Schön's text (1983) discussed what he termed the 'crisis of confidence' facing the professions and posited the view that working through a process of reflecting both on and in action would enable the individual to develop greater insight on their internalised experiences, thereby readying them for action and the possibility of enacting change in their working practice. Fitting well into the evolving academic professional education programmes, this individualised process was rapidly accepted.

Schön's work on the reflective practitioner explored the potential for a radical shift towards professionals digging into and under the behaviours, attitudes and experiences that had shaped their delivery within a range of settings. His original concept of critical praxis opened up the idea of questioning assumptions inherent in the practitioner in order to move the self forward (Kilminster, Zukas, Bradbury & Frost, 2010). Conceptualising reflection-in-action – individual's awareness of their actions in the moment based on knowledge created through action – and the supporting reflection-on-action after the event – providing new insights and learning from a temporal and spatial distance – encouraged a dual layer of self-knowledge development moving from tacit to explicit knowledge-in-action (Schön, 1983).

Criticism of Schön's theory has centred on the lack of contextual understanding that individualised reflection offers (Billett & Newton, 2010; Furlong, 2000, 2005; West, 2010) as well as the focus on consolidating or affirming existing practice rather than exploring the underlying assumptions that generated it (Fook, 2002, 2010). Having gained prominence in the field of management learning (Vince & Reynolds, 2004), and against a growing tide of managerialism and accountability which began in the 1980s, reflection became a tool used to measure performance and generate accountability in the professions.

Models of practice were developed, for example, Gibbs' (1988) Reflective Cycle (see Figure 2.a) – adapted by Bulman & Schultz (2013) for a nursing context, Kolb's (1984) Learning Cycle (see Figure 2.b) and later built on with, for example, Rolfe, Freshwater & Jasper (2001) 'what, so what, now what?' reflective cycle (see Figure 2.c below). These offered (still) useful processes for reflecting on practice, but are 2-dimensional in nature, allowing reflection to become mechanistic and counter-intuitive (West, 2010; Fook, 2010) and what Schön would have termed 'technical rationality'. Reflection had become a positivistic approach to reflection that reduced practice development to a checklist of behaviours and the application of theoretical models with no scope for the broader context (Schön, 1983; Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

Boud (2010) goes further to indicate that the elements of professional programmes that have reflection or reflective practice as a focus are little more than a link to activities that are used to promote reflection rather than on any critical process that would engage a deeper sense of self-knowledge. This supports Otineoh's (2011) research into teachers' understanding of critical reflection processes discussed later in this chapter. This, coupled with a lack of any real theoretical development, has resulted in scepticism about reflection (Fook,2002;Kilminster et al., 2010; Thompson & Pascal, 2011)which stems in part from an apparent lack of criticality.

Figure 2.1.a: Gibbs' (1988) Reflective Practice Cycle

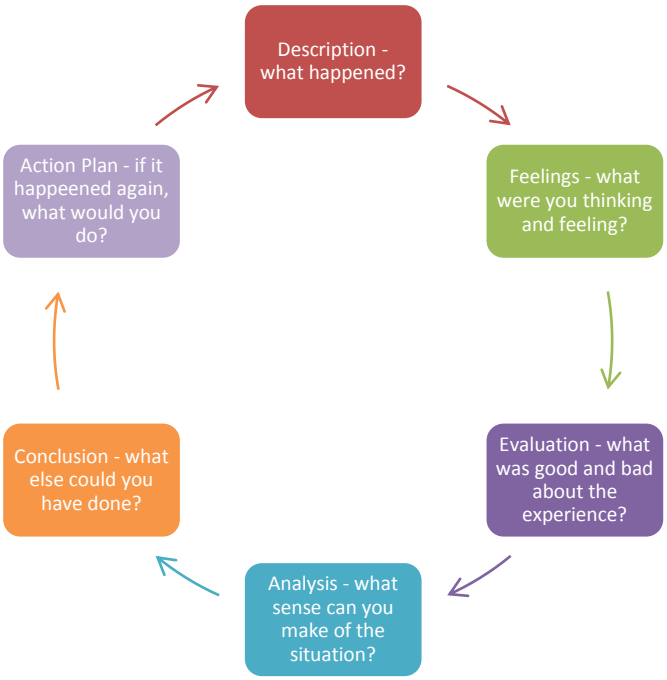


Figure 2.1b: Kolb's (1984) Learning Cycle

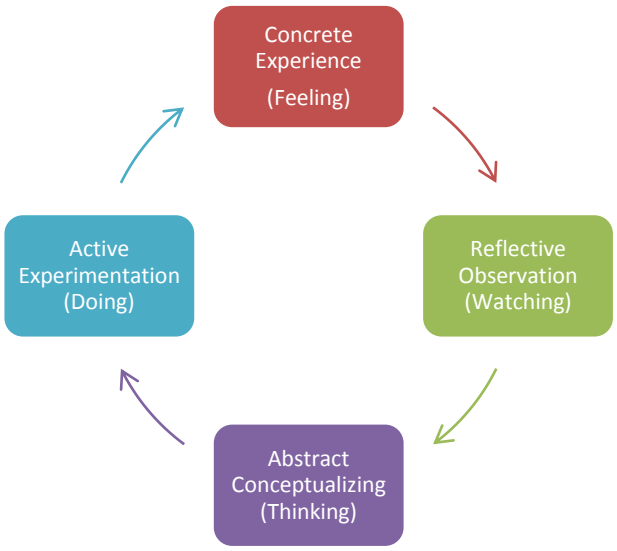
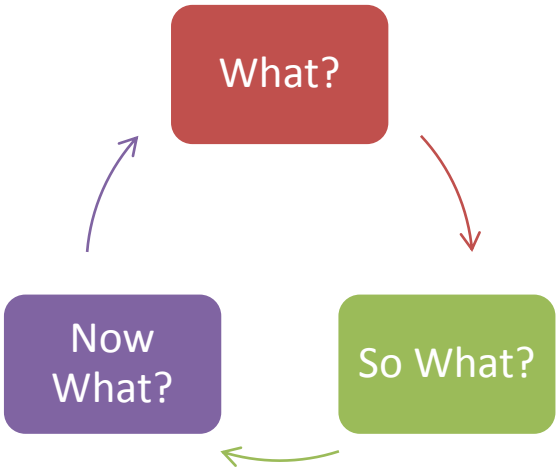


Figure 2.1c: Rolfe et al. (2001) Reflective Cycle



In addition, the past four decades has seen a myriad of terms being generated to describe reflection in some form; critical reflection, reflexivity, critical learning, experiential learning, transformational learning, action learning/research (Fook, 2010). This confusing lexicon has become to some degree the new swamplands of professional practice (Schön, 1983) offering possibilities for misunderstanding and misuse of terms. It has also generated a range of overlapping discourses about the definition, place and purpose of reflection within professional practice. The majority of literature on reflective practice in its widest sense has been focused on empirical research of the methodologies employed to engage in reflective thinking (for example Canning & Callan, 2010; Newton, 2010; Watson & Wilcox, 2000) . Although there have been empirical studies into the effectiveness of reflective practice, these have been few in number; Fook, White and Gardner (2006) note a small number of articles and chapters regarding research into reflective practice. However, the lack of consistency in relation to definitions of reflective practice alone has led to the evidence offered being limited as the data considered were not comparable (Cornford, 2001; Fook et al., 2006). There is also relatively little literature that debates the theoretical concepts of reflection (Fook, 2010; Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

What follows is an exploration of the main terms used in the context of reflection – reflective practice, critical reflection and reflexivity – drawing on literature to explore these concepts in brief. Following this is a focus on the growing body of literature and research on the development of collaborative and collective reflective practices, where reflection is a reflexive, lived, embodied experience.

2.3 EXPLORING CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS OF 'REFLECTION'

Reflective practice, as has already been discussed, originated as a way of individuals generating new knowledge about their own specific experiences. It is therefore inherently connected to the idea of learning and knowledge creation, although Schön's initial concept stopped short of contextualising the learner's experience and the co-creation of new knowledge with others (Thompson & Pascal, 2011). Boud (2010) discussed this in relation to the changes in reflection and reflective practice as concepts since their early development in the 1980s and interestingly he noted that reflection is often misrepresented as merely the act of writing about an experience; he added that it is as though writing and thinking has simply been renamed reflection. I believe that this speaks to the criticality debate raised earlier. If reflection as a concept has been reduced to a series of activities rather than a conscious and developmental act of deep meaning making (Cunliffe, 2002, 2004; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004; Stuart 2001) then the activity used will offer only a superficial level of knowledge development.

Both Boud (2010) and Fook (2010) mention the argument that reflection is no different from thinking and certainly much of the criticism levelled at Schön's initial concept has been about the apparent lack of any evident growth in self-knowledge as a result of the process of engaging in reflection as the process itself seeks to simplify rather than expand on practice (Cunliffe, 2004, Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004). Boud's (2010) frustration is evident when he discusses the way in which technicists have taken a checklist approach to reflection without understanding the deeper reason behind it. He suggested that the purpose of reflection is to enable complex experiences or events to be understood in a way that is felt rather than taught. Fook (2010) argues that critical reflection is about the questioning of

inherent assumptions which leads to a change in action; a view supported by Furlong (2000, 2005) when he discusses the changing face of the teaching profession and a move towards critical theory as being a way of challenging implicit or unconsidered assumptions.

Furlong's (2005) consideration of the idea of making tacit knowledge explicit is a crucial part of critical reflective practice which is highlighted implicitly in many research studies (for example Canning & Callan, 2010; Newton, 2010) and is a construct of learning development first made explicit by Polyani (1966) and developed by other learning theorists such as Kolb (1984) and Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995). Nonaka and colleagues' Knowledge Creation Theory model indicates a clear connection between the development of tacit knowledge through to explicit and visible knowledge by engaging with lived experiences that centre on learning by doing (Nonaka and Peltakorpi, 2006; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Creating this kind of schematic map of learning progression where a practitioner can track their development from novice, through competent and to expert by constructing new knowledge and reframing existing knowledge, as the learning journey progresses is fundamental to the development of know-how (Linds, 2008).

Bolton (2010) echoes the view that reflection on its own is not critical (Fook, 2010; Mezirow, 1991) and that instead it requires inductive reasoning, analysis drawn from theoretical understanding and practical experiences and the concept of metaphorical bootstrapping as inferred by Saltiel (2010) in his discussion of Gould's (1996) work on imagery and reflective learning. In her writing on 'through-the-mirror' reflective processing, Bolton (2010) argues that reflection as a mirror metaphor indicates that you are simply looking at something you know is already there – when you look in the mirror at your reflection, what looks back at you is you. In order to get any true benefit from a reflective process, it therefore needs to be multi-layered (Schön, 1987) and move beyond the idea of a mirrored experience so that true transformational learning can occur.

To distinguish further between reflective practice and critical reflection, Fook (2010) argues that the former is a broader and more overarching

container for a range of different critical processes and the latter is focused on transformational learning experiences (Linds & Vettraino, 2015). This resonates with Mezirow who sees reflection as a mental process requiring higher order cognitive reasoning (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow & Associates, 1990, 2000) with the ability to learn from previous experiences in order to move beyond as being vital in developing as an individual. Like Fook (2010), Mezirow (1991, 2000) makes a distinction between reflection and reflexivity (one possible approach to critical reflection), the latter being the thought in action which transforms the practice during the process of acting as opposed to after. Reflexivity, or thoughtful action, involves the idea of the transformative 'stop' moment (Appelbaum, 1995; Fels, 2012, 2015) This is the ability to halt the action and think about what is working or not working and how understanding and acting on that can make a useful change in the process. Rather than being a literal translation of a reflective moment, suggested by Thompson and Pascal (2011), the 'stop' is the advent of intelligent choice (Appelbaum, 1995); a moment of critical and aesthetic reflexivity that appropriates the aesthetics of the experience (the emotions, feelings, sensations) and uses them to transform action from that point (Sutherland, 2012).

Reflexivity suggests an act or action; that of flexing, flexibility, the capacity to see around and beyond what is in front of you; a sense of turning or bending back (Steier, 1991). Tyler and Rosen (2008) play with reflexivity in this way, engaging in a discourse with the listener in the process of storytelling to 'bend back' (the literal meaning of the etymological root of reflexive) the story and dig underneath to create new pathways and new critical learning for both the storyteller and the listener. These pathways speak to the holistic nature of the lived experience; they are about the person as a whole rather than the one experience (Canning & Callan, 2010; Rowe, 2008; Sutherland, 2012).Sutherland (2012) offers a new way of considering reflexivity drawing from the benefits of creating knowledge through understanding the experiences we have through sensory means. He terms this aesthetic reflexivity.

In the creation of new knowledge, there are also power and power dynamics. Fook (2002, 2010) and Fook and Gardner (2007) view their work on critical reflection through the lens of both postmodernism and deconstruction. Both theoretical concepts relate to ideas of power and change in the context of situational reflection, or the environments (be they social, political, cultural) that the individual is situated in. Through understanding the impact of context on the individual, a practitioner has the ability to be aware of the possibilities of changing the power dynamic and therefore affecting transformational change (Fook & Gardner, 2007). This understanding of the power dynamic in the exploration of knowledge offers the reflective practitioner a paradox to explore. Fook and Gardner (2007) make the point that critical reflection is bound up in our assumptions about who we are and how we ought to be. Therefore, recognising the possibilities of transformational change also highlights the possibilities for anxieties and the setting up of defences by practitioners not wishing to open up their real practices to scrutiny (Fook, 2010; Pässilä, Oikarinen & Harmaakorpi, 2015; Schön, 1983).

As Warne and McAndrew (2008) indicate, the place of not knowing can be anxiety provoking. In Stuart's narrative-biographical research into the development of critical reflection with midwifery students, she highlights her own fears of uncovering challenging or uncomfortable knowledge: *"subconsciously I was afraid of the consequences of moving from one ontological state to another."* (2001, p.172) and later she states: "I felt vulnerable and afraid. I retreated to my journal which proved a useful confidante and made the following confession to it: "*I do NOT want to engage in reflective practice. I feel very threatened."* (Stuart, 2001, p.173).

This paradox lies at the heart of critical reflective experiences. To develop rich and transformational understanding about the self, there is a need to be open and honest and yet, as Pässilä et al. (2015) state, this honesty is tempered with an unspoken understanding that there is a power relationship that exists which works counter to reflective learning and practice. Part of the construct of power in the reflective process is connected to our use and understanding of language. Saltiel also argues (2010) that language and

culture both play a part in negating any objectivity in reflection. Picking up on Gould's (1996) work, Saltiel highlights the fact that we never see an objective truth in reflection because of the subjective meanings that language embodies; the cultural and subjective lenses through which we view any reflective experience. Language is a shared construct and this is another fundamental element of critical reflexive practice (Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

The individual therefore creates new knowledge, not in isolation but instead within a social world that influences and is influenced by the individual (Fook, 2002, 2010). The process of engaging in this social world is a lived, embodied experience which is subjectively understood by the individual based on the way in which they interact and what histories they bring to that process. It is also a reactive process with the individual evolving their new knowledge through a bias borne out of the methods that they use to learn (Fook, 2010; Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

Knowledge is therefore derived from real, lived and shared experience rather from deductive processes (Cunliffe, 2004; Fook, 2010; Pässilä et al., 2015; Thompson & Pascal, 2011). Our creation of knowledge is influenced by the way in which we see and understand the world around us and the depth at which we create that new knowledge determines whether we reflect from a realist perspective or whether we challenge assumptions at a deeper, reflexive level from a constructionist or deconstructivist perspective (Cunliffe & Jun, 2005). Knowledge creation is also situated in the construct of culture and language that we embody and therefore requires a critical frame with which to bend back (Corlett, 2012; Sutherland, 2012; Steier, 1991; Tyler & Rosen, 2008) and understand ourselves in order to transform our practice. How collective reflection and embodied processes enable us to build rich and complex pictures of our practice is explored in the following sections.

2.3.1 REFLECTION AS PART OF A COLLECTIVE WHOLE

There have been a number of studies carried out into the effectiveness of group or collective processes to stimulate and foster reflective or reflexive action (for example, Corlett, 2012; Keevers & Treleavan, 2011; Pässilä et al.,

2015). Based on a social constructionist paradigm, these studies argue that reflective processes are relational; that learning is a continual, organic process that is formed from interactions with the world around us. Our meaning making processes are therefore inherently interwoven with the narratives of others (Corlett, 2012). Rowe's (Rowe, 2008) paper on collective learning posits the view that collective learning is a way of exploring and enhancing understanding which offers a richer perspective. He uses the metaphor of dance to explain the way in which the holistic nature of learning takes into account the fluid movement within the individual's own meaning making processes, and between their learning and others. In a similar vein, Sutherland's (2012) research into aesthetic reflexivity in which he engages MBA participants in conducting a choir, indicates that individuals felt part of a collective whole and that leadership itself was an aesthetic experience, resonant as part of group interaction. This view is echoed in the research of Parr, Haberstron and Kottler (2008) whose work with interactive therapeutic writing indicated that the sense of universality of experiences evident in the group sharing of journal writing created group cohesiveness and fostered learning.

Reflection, once seen as an individualistic experience, has evolved into an often collective and collaborative practice. Boud (2010) indicates that professions now view reflection as something that is done within a professional, work or practice context often involving groups or teams. His work on organisational reflective processes (Boud, 2006; Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1995) led Boud to develop a group or collective theory of reflective practice which he has termed 'productive reflection' (Boud, 2010). Unlike the individualistic reflective processes discussed earlier, productive reflection involves the whole organisation in a learning process, moving beyond the individual professional's needs to an understanding of the connecting 'players' and stakeholders. The act of reflection therefore becomes a contextualised, embodied, co-produced and trans-disciplinary model (Boud, 2010) offering organisations an opportunity to be reflexive as an entity and develop as real learning organisations (Senge, 2006). Following Boud's (2006, 2010) model and extending his concept of organisation to be one that

is open ended involving a wide range of stakeholders, then arguably Pässilä et al.'s(2015) research into the development of embodied reflexivity through dramaturgical methodology with a range of stakeholders involved in health care settings focusing on working with youth, would be an example of productive reflection and emerging reflexivity, impacting on a large scale.

The sharing of experiences enables the development of a deeper awareness of both the socio-cultural realities in which individuals operate and which shape their lives, but also that we have the capacity to transform that reality into something else. Freire was instrumental in developing a critical pedagogy of reflection in the early 1970s (Cunliffe, 2004; Freire, 1968/1970). In his seminal text *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968/1970) he explored the concept of praxis. A cyclical learning process, similar to those of Gibbs' (1988) and Kolb (1984) discussed earlier, Freire's concept of praxis was a much more holistic ideal about knowledge creation and exchange which is shared and through the lens of multiple realities, becomes a more humanistic approach to learning (Cunliffe, 2004; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004). Through praxis a community can gain new knowledge about the social world which they inhabit and this can be mapped onto existing schema in individuals within that community in order to find synergies in the experiences they have had (Freire, 1968/1970).

Mapping an existing schema onto a situation or learning experience that is new or less familiar is a fundamental part of how humans learn. Metaphorical or analogical transfer and connection provides a central part of the mapping process (Gentner, 2010; Kurtz, Miao & Gentner, 2001) and these connections are deeper when shared with others. Indeed Alvesson, Hardy and Harley (2008) considered the notion of plural reflexivity as being beneficial to understanding the ways in which communities grow and change as a result of shared experiences and moments of reflection. Cameron, Hayes and Mah Wren's (2000) research further supports the concept of co-constructed knowledge creation through critical reflective inquiry, positing the view that the iterative and shared process of knowledge creation in an organisation or group can lead to emancipatory change.

Socially constructed knowing is therefore an organic process developed through reflecting on and reflexively questioning existing patterns of knowledge in order to create new connections (Corlett, 2012). We have also seen in this chapter that the act of reflexively questioning is one that stems not from an external form of knowing but rather from an embodied, lived set of experiences (Corlett, 2012; Cunliffe, 2002, 2004; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004; Fook 2010). The connection between reflexivity, critical reflection and embodiment as part of social constructed knowledge creation is therefore explored below.

2.3.2 EMBODIMENT, DRAMATIC PROCESS AND COLLECTIVE REFLEXIVITY

Embodiment and reflexivity appear as terms in a number of discursive articles focused on reflexive practice as lived experience (for example, Cunliffe, 2004; Kinsella, 2007; Leigh & Bailey, 2013; Rowe, 2000; Smears, 2009). There are many more examples of empirical studies focused either explicitly or implicitly on embodiment and reflexivity, many of which foreground the importance of embodied reflexive processes as social constructions (for example, Finlay, 2006; Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015; Ranheim, Kärner, Arman, Rehnsfeldt & Berterö, 2010; Worsfeld, 2013). Others examine autoethnographically the experience of embodied practice (Fels, 2009a, 2012; Finlay, 2005, 2006, 2014; Smears, 2009). The majority of discursive and research articles are focused on and in the arts (for example, Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015; Smears, 2009; Sutherland 2012) or health and social care (Finlay, 2005; Stuart, 2001; Thompson & Pascal, 2012), although embodied reflexivity is emerging as an area of study within the field of management education through the work of authors such as Beirne and Knight(2007), Cunliffe (2002, 2004, Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004, Cunliffe & Jun, 2005), Vince and Reynolds, (2004) and Boje (2001, 2008).

Interesting to note is the lack of consistency in relation to how embodied reflexivity is regarded, with various responses offered in relation to embodied reflexivity as a concept or type of reflection as opposed to the idea of embodied reflexivity as a way of reflecting; a process and/or an activity. For

the purposes of this research, embodied reflexivity is seen as a process. Reflexivity, as has been discussed, is about reflection-in-action (Fook and Gardner, 2007; Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow & Associates, 1990, 2000); it is about engaging in a process that is about being in the moment, experiencing and acting based on that experience. Arguably, therefore, all reflexive action is embodied and is a type of knowing; a category of reflexive practice (Kinsella, 2007). However, it is also a way of knowing – a process, an action, activity or experience – that can be consciously constructed (Fels, 2008, 2009a, or Smears, 2009) or come about as a sub-conscious or unconscious action (Linds, 2008).

To better understand the argument surrounding embodied reflexivity as a concept or process/activity, it would be useful at this point to consider what is meant by embodiment in relation to reflective and reflexive practices. Embodiment as a concept centres on how we understand the world around us through our physical being (Finlay, 2005; Varela, Rosch & Thompson, 1993; Merleau-Ponty, 1962/1965; Landes, 2012). Finlay (2005, 2014) defines the ability to understand the physical world as being integrally linked to the fact that we are physical beings. Our bodies operate within a cultural and social context that influences the way we manipulate objects, share ideas, aesthetically appreciate the world through our sense and so on. This understanding is shaped by the way we think and how we put those thoughts into action which would indicate embodiment as a process or activity. Varela et al. (1993) and Lakoff and Johnson (1999) suggest that this is embodied action; knowing the world through our biological, physical and cognitive structures.

Lakoff and Johnson (1999) suggest three levels at which embodiment occurs:

- The neural level – involving the circuitry in our bodies, the sensory and motor processes that carry information throughout our systems;
- The phenomenological level – every experience we have, everything that we are aware of is influenced by the actions we take;

- The cognitive unconscious level – those processes and connections that we are unaware of consciously but which enable us to understand and make conscious our experiences;

All three levels are in operation and all interconnect and overlap and generate within an individual the ability to *know how* to take action in a given situation. Varela et al. (1993) give a useful example of this when discussing how ideas are received and understood by a 'perceiver'. When the perceiver experiences an event, at the neural and cognitive unconscious levels, information processing occurs as connections are attempted to bring to consciousness existing schema to enable our existing knowledge of the world to be used as a departure ground from which to make sense of the experience. At a phenomenological level, the perceiver is experiencing an action within their own context or sphere of reference, ie: what directly concerns them at the time of the action. They embody their experiences and guide subsequent action as their understanding of the event unfolds. In other words, we work reflexively through our bodies; what Finlay (2005) terms *"corporeal reflexivity"* (p.272) in order to move forward in our understanding of the world around us and also of ourselves.

Kinsella (2007) laments the lack of professional debate focused on the concept of embodied reflexivity and argues that Schön's (1983) original reflective practitioner concept is misinterpreted as lacking criticality. Believing that it is not possible to separate the physical and cognitive processes of the human body, Kinsella (2007) argues that Schön's original theory automatically requires a critical position on the part of the reflecting practitioner. However, as has already been argued in this chapter, the depth and criticality of the reflective process depends upon the lens with which the practitioner views their work as well as the depth of challenge to their assumptions (Cunliffe, 2004; Finlay, 2005, 2006; Fook & Gardner, 2007; Thompson & Pascal, 2012). Although, as Lakoff and Johnson (1999) indicate, all three levels of embodied experience are present within an individual, a belief that those reflecting on their practice are therefore automatically engaging both body and mind is not valid because there

requires a level of conscious recognition of the experience to know how to make useful shifts forward.

Linds (2008) offers a useful personal experience of enacted embodied learning and the development of ethical 'know-how' in the context of his work as a facilitator within the field of drama and applied theatre. Linds (2008) defines embodied knowing as being a body-mind connection that enables ethical practice to be based on the way in which the person's mind and body are attuned to and in the world around them. Embodied action is therefore not purely about the self, the individual learning from experiences around them. Embodied action is about understanding the influence actions, thoughts, words have on others. This conscious requirement for embodied reflexivity is echoed in the work of Alvesson et al. (2008) who discuss the nature of embodied reflexivity within research processes. Exploring their practice as reflexive researchers, they argue for an understanding of embodied reflexivity that engages relationally the subjects and researchers in an evolving process. Embodied reflexivity is therefore about being wholly conscious of one's own feelings and emotions in order to be full immersed in the here and now (Finlay, 2005; Linds, 2008; Varela et al., 1995). It is about acknowledging that no one just observes, an observer is impacted on and impacts the actions taking place (Halling & Goldfarb, 1991).

Finlay (2005) explores this idea further suggesting that to truly understand others, an individual must find some connection or similarity within themselves; some way of attuning their actions to those of 'the Other' (Finlay, 2005). Again, referring to Linds' (2008) example, as facilitator of a challenging drama workshop situation, he moved fluidly between participant, researcher, facilitator role embodying the inter-subjective gap (Finlay, 2005, 2006) that existed in moments of tension making unconscious shifts in his actions to enable the safety of the work to continue. Through the process of reflexive action we are therefore creating and adapting to a changing environment (Maturana & Varela, 1987/1992).

Leigh and Bailey (2013) discuss embodied reflection as 'living and lived experience.' Having self-awareness, a conscious understanding of one's

own thought processes during an experience and being able to reflect through connecting with how one's body has reacted is embodied action. There is clearly a strong correlation between embodied reflection within the field of reflective practice and embodiment as part of the work of arts (and other) therapies (Jennings, 1998, 2012; Jones, 2007; Leigh & Bailey, 2013). In therapeutic theatre or drama work (as opposed to Dramatherapy practice), theatrical processes enable spaces for embodied reflection to occur as the reflective cycle in the drama practitioner is a constant and often unconscious process, arising through their need to engage bodily with character and role; theirs and others (Beirne & Knight, 2007). For example, the project carried out by Medina, Weltsek-Medina and Twoney (2007) and detailed in their paper on critical literacies in drama as performative pedagogy, exemplifies how the very physical act of embodying a role can create reflective moments which one of their participants described as *"mirror[s] for reality"* (p.124). Boal refers to this form of bending back (a term echoed by Tyler & Rosen, 2008, and Steier, 1991) and re-visioning character and role in his therapeutic work contained within his text *The Rainbow of Desire* (1995). Jones (2007) connects the learning and reflective processes through his exploration of the dramatic body, indicating that the body is often the conduit for understanding self, supporting the view of others (for example, Finlay 2005; Jennings, 1998; Leigh & Bailey, 2013; Varela et al., 1993) that the person lives through, in and with their body and therefore all of their experiences are understood through embodied action.

Returning to Freire's development of a critical pedagogy for educational transformation, embodied reflexivity offers a duality of reflexive possibilities. Cunliffe (2002, 2004) and Cunliffe and Eastery-Smith (2004) explore this as 'thinking about reality', the ability of separating ourselves from reality and thinking about situations objectively; observing ourselves outside of the moment and in the moment. This duality was explored by a contemporary of Freire's, Augusto Boal, who combined Freire's critical commentary on transformative education with a dramaturgical theory focused on exploring reflexive and embodied learning, around the world (Boal, 1973/1979, 1995, 2003).Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (original version 1973) construct grew

from the experience he had of using theatrical processes to create temporal and aesthetic spaces for transformational learning to take place (Beirne & Knight, 2007; Boal, 1973/1979, 1995; Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015).

Boal coined the term Metaxis which can be defined as the experience of belonging to two worlds simultaneously; the real, physical world and an alternative and fictive reality created by being able to see oneself as both character and actor (Boal, 1995; Pässilä et al., 2015; Vettraino & Linds, 2015). The space between and betwixt (Linds, 2006) is a transitional place where reflective and reflexive stories and narratives emerge, evolving from instant reactions to stimuli around us. In moments of transition, stories are often told in order to enable smooth passage between experiences (Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990); metaphorical or analogical bootstrapping occurs as we seek to link one unknown or unfamiliar moment to another (Gentner, 2010; Kurtz et al., 2001). In a similar vein, metaxic action takes place in the space between experiences, potentially within multiple stories told in order to move the individual from where they were before that reflective moment, to where they need to be. Collier (2010, 2015) might refer to metaxis as self-spectating, drawing on the work of dramatist Bolton (Davis, 2010) and arguing that it is possible for someone to be both creator and audience of their own reflexive process. Bolton (Davis, 2010) considers reflection through a dramaturgical lens, describing a view of individuals as spectators in their own storyworlds, watching action unfold in their lives and influencing changes as a result. As Collier (2010, 2015) states, it is the perceived change that causes the reflective individual to consider their experiences from another's perspective.

Pässilä et al.'s (2015) research demonstrates the impact of what they define as a post-Boalian approach to reflexive practice on a co-constructed learning experience in the context of healthcare. Drawing on the change agency provided in this theatrical methodology to disrupt conventional behaviours, participants became co-researchers in their own embodied learning processes. The same concept was developed in the research Forgasz (2014) carried out with pre-service teachers. Again, drawing on Boalian methodology, Forgasz argued that the approach used moved the act

of reflection from a predominantly cognitive discourse (Schön, 1983, 1987) to one that involves sensory exploration through corporeal responses thereby leading to more deeply embedded learning (Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015). Beirne and Knight (2007) also built on the body of work within the Theatre of the Oppressed movement (Boal, 1973/1979) working with management students. Creating opportunities for these students to foster critical dialogue through their approach, as possibilities for activism (Beirne & Knight, 2007), their research argued for a form of radical theatre to be developed to enable critically reflexive moments which embed learning in a way that traditional methodologies cannot.

Pässilä et al.'s (2015) research into the collective reflexive experience embedded within lived experiences once again draws us back to the importance of aesthetics in the reflective process. Focused on the co-construction of reflexive learning in a health care context, utilising a dramaturgical process, the researchers enabled participants to 'bend back' (Steier, 1991; Tyler & Rosen, 2008) experiences during dramatic action, embodying their learning as part of the aesthetic experience. Returning to Nonaka and Takeuchi's Knowledge Creation Model, reflexive action within this dramatic experience allows tacit knowledge to become explicit moving through transformational understanding as it occurs (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). True reflexivity or praxis becomes more tangible as new actions emerge from the continual reflexive cycle.

2.4 SUMMARY

Before progressing onto to the next stage of this journey which is to consider in more depth the place of narrative and story in embodied reflexive processes, it is useful to consolidate and summarise the literature review to this point.

The discussion has so far elucidated that reflection is a concept heavily embedded in the professional practice of those within the caring professions (for example Fook & Gardner, 2007; West, 2010). It has also extended into the area of management and leadership learning (for example, Cunliffe, 2004a, 2004b; Beirne & Knight, 2007; Rowe, 2008) and contributions from

this field have added to the call for a new epistemological understanding of reflective practice as most of the empirical literature focuses on the practice of reflection as opposed to the concept.

Attempting to define reflection as a process or concept is rife with complexity as there are multiple terms used often interchangeably to describe the experience of thinking about and through one's practice in order to learn and move forward. What has become clearer in the research is that there are levels of reflection leading from a basic 'thinking back to' an event or activity and gaining some insight from that thought process (Schön, 1983), to a deep and lived sense of understanding in and through an experience or set of experiences that causes transformational change in one's practice based on learning that is felt or embodied, emerging out of the interaction between self and others (Fels, 1998, 2009a, 2012; Leigh & Bailey, 2013).

As a process, embodied reflexivity opens up the possibility for new ways of knowing and understanding. As a shared and collective experience, embodied reflexive processes become opportunities for complex learning to occur in which participants gain in-the-moment insights into practice through their symbiotic interaction with others. As Fels states:

> *"We desire connectivity. We seek a critical mass. This is how we will survive."* (2009a, p.6)

There is also a strong link between embodied reflexive practice and dramaturgical processes that allow for creative reflective experiences to be constructed and embedded. Reflexive processes are bound up in the narrative containers for the stories individuals and groups create and tell. These stories once shared become lived experiences for both teller and listener in which new knowledge is formed through the storyworlds which emerge in the minds of those sharing the experience. It is this aspect of reflexive embodied practice that forms the next part of this literature review; what is the place and purpose of narrative and story in the embodied reflexive process?

2.5 NARRATIVE AND STORY AS EMBODIED, REFLECTIVE PROCESS

There is a plethora of research and discursive literature focused on the use of story creation and telling in some form as a tool for reflecting on practice (for example, Abma, 2003; Hunt, 2001; Hoban, 2000; Kemp, 2001; Stuart, 2001; Taylor, Fisher & Dufresne, 2002). In many cases, the authors present the view that reflective writing through journaling or developing portfolios of reflective logs will enable the participants to gain a holistic view of their practice (for example, Lyons, 2006; Maich, Brown & Royle, 2000; Newton, 2000; Parr et al., 2000). This is potentially a simplistic view of reflective practice and makes an assumption that the practitioner reflecting truly understands and works through a critical process in the telling of their story. Otienoh (2011) in her research into teachers' journal writing as a reflective process found that this criticality in reflective journaling was lacking. She argues that without a clear epistemological framework for critical thinking, the process of professional 'story' telling about one's practice is meaningless. Done, Knowler, Murphy, Rea and Gale (2011) also place emphasis on the need for a continuing process of praxis; reflexive in-the-moment critical understanding and development of changing practice. Without this, reflection is merely an activity without long term benefits. The experience of those reflecting on practice can also have an impact on capacity and understanding. Vásquez (2007) explored the narratives of novice workplace practitioners focusing on the dimension of narrative creation Ochs and Capps (2001) refer to as moral stance, highlighting the fact that experience plays a significant part in the reflective process during the creation and telling of narratives and that this is often not considered in the development of reflective processes.

Narrative, and story creation and telling, are an integral part of the postmodern theories of reflection, critical reflection, reflexivity and embodied reflexive processes. Understanding their role in the development of embodied reflexive practice is important to defining how effective practice can be developed.

Story creation and narrative are modes of expression and communication. Stories can act as mirrors into one's life, offer opportunities to vision and

dream and provide answers to social questions through metaphorical connection (Kearney, 2002; Livo & Rietz, 1986). Gotschall (2013) posits a variety of purposes for storytelling; as a way of imparting information, vicariously living and experiencing, creating social cohesion, *"cognitive play"* (p.27) or perhaps showing off to potential mates. Essentially stories enable us to present ourselves and our histories to the world (Abma, 2003; Cobley, 2014) in ways that engender a shared knowing or understanding (Boje, 2001, 2008; Fels, 2004a; Kemp, 2001). The terms 'narrative' and 'story' are not interchangeable (Cobley 2014). The word story originates from the Greek 'historia' meaning investigation or research into past events, the recounting of an event or activity. The word narrative originates in late Latin from the word 'narrativus' meaning the telling of a story. Etymologically the two words are linked and authors such as Polkingthorne (1988) have used them interchangeably at times. However, they have different purposes; 'narrative' provides the container for 'story' to emerge by acting as a framework or structure that gives the story meaning through coherence (Abbott, 2008; Livo & Rietz, 1986).

As containers, narratives allow for a range of individual stories to merge in the creation of communal whole (Kearney, 2002). Multiple narratives can be gathered and connected to form an overarching view of an event. It is often possible to identify first hand narratives from individuals or groups present during particular experiences and also to critique documentation that has come from such experiences. Interpretation of experiences that have been shared can give a fictional quality to the stories being told. Tyler and Rosen (2008) explore this through the story of Hilda Stern Cohen, a concentration camp survivor who told her story to Gail Rosen and asked her to pass it on. Each time Rosen tells Hilda's story, it changes with the change being driven by the telling. The way in which one individual reflects on an experience or event will be different from the way another individual views the same experience or event (Cobley 2014; Corlett, 2012; Keevers & Treleavan, 2011). Tyler and Rosen's (2008) exploration of the process of co-constructing a story with multiple audiences enabled them to generate collective learning and to move the narrative forward. Boje, Rosile, Saylor and Saylor's recent

work (2015) into what they term as ‘storytelling theatrics’ echoes the importance of co-created stories enabling participants to share and interact with others’ lived experiences, thereby adding to the communal understanding of the narrative generated by the multiplicity of stories told.

Stories offering spaces where trust becomes possible through the sense of communal understanding (Simmons, 2006) are therefore valuable reflexive opportunities. Frequently used as tools for addressing a vast and diverse range of issues from deep rooted fears, through the traumas of conflict and the horrors of war (Ayalon, 2007, 2013; Lahad, 1992, 2013; Tyler & Rosen, 2008) personal, fictional and metaphorical storytelling has offered people solace, a virtual stronghold to contain the challenges faced and a voice for truth and for their narratives to be heard. There is power in the act of storytelling itself, as a tool for creative activism (Forest, 2009).

The term ‘story’ suggests an individualised response to experience which is then shared through discourse with others. Through that sharing – the telling of the story – a shared narrative can be created to frame the communal story. Storytelling is therefore a crucial part of the act of story creation and in the telling, story becomes a socially constructed activity (Boje, 2001, 2008; Boje et al., 2015). On their own, words have little meaning; it is when they are used together that meaning occurs. In the same way, when individuals share experiences through self-story or personal narratives, the stories take on new meanings and become re-constructed by those listening and sharing in the story experience (Dennis, 2007; Razack, 1993; Simmons, 2006a, 2006b). Learning through sharing becomes a common feature of storytelling, with metaphor providing linkages for individuals to grasp meaning. When we reflect on experiences we have had we often use metaphors and fictional narratives to explain what happened, not only to ourselves but also to others. Metaphor is part of the human make-up; Geary (2011), for example, notes that we use around six metaphors every minute so great is our need to connect and have our stories understood. Metaphors enable us to link concepts together providing analogical connections (Banks-Wallace, Barnes, Swanegan & Lewis, 2007; Forest, 2009; Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). Metaphor points out the way in which things are like other

things. Analogies provide more of a logical argument to support the shared characteristics.

Similar to the concept of analogical learning, which involves information being mapped from one base source which is well known and understood, to another anchor point which is less familiar (Kurtz et al., 2001), it could be argued that *metaphorical learning* involves comparative linking of metaphors within story contexts to generate a more powerful and shared understanding of a given situation; a form of 'metaphorical bootstrapping' linking to Gentner's (2010) and Kurtz et al. (2001) concept discussion.

An alternative view of narrative suggested by Cobley (2014) indicates that narratives are used to describe and reflect on real events and, in this context, the narrative becomes both the container and the content for the individual's story. Allbon (2012) defines narrative as a way of making sense of past events; a retrospective capacity for understanding experiences. For example, narrative accounts of current and recent events are easy to explore as factual experiences because they are 'lived' by the individuals who are doing the telling. Kemp's (2001) exploration of narrative as a critical reflexive process in her research with a group of Post Graduate Certificate of Education students is an example of lived experiences shared through creative fact-ions (factual and fiction at the same time) with the individuals' narratives becoming part of a group collective. In Kemp's (2001) process the use of imaginative techniques to stimulate broader critical reflection, brings about new knowledge developed through aesthetic means that is self-forming rather than a reliance on technical narrative creation.

Denzin (1989a) differentiates between personal experience narratives and self-stories; the former being everyday experiences that might be shared with another individual and the latter being more formidable, life-changing experiences that become told as part of a social and communal experience. Testimony from the victims of atrocities brought on by war fall into this category as shared self-stories patch-worked together to form a greater whole.

Narrative is a natural form of representation for human communication and an aspect or approach of this representation is reflection. Cobley (2014) indicates that narrative as a reflective approach to representation is about giving meaning to people or places or things. The narrative used reflects the experiences that were part of a person's understanding of the people/place/thing. Boje (2001, 2006) and Allbon (2012) add to this understanding of narrative through the concept of the ante-narrative; the *"complex, ambiguous, fragmented state"* (Allbon, 2012, p.62) that exists before the formation of a linear narrative process. Drawing on her own autoethnographic research, Allbon (2012) tracks the development of her self-reflexivity through the creation of ante-narrative, narrative and lived story, to explore historical experiences and revisit current experiences in a developing epistemological process.

Understanding and using both the narrative and ante-narrative(s) with metaphor, or fictionalising narrative can enable a fresh and non- (or less) threatening view of a challenging situation. In turn, this offers individuals a chance to reflect on the way in which they have dealt with an interaction, event or experience. For example, Bar-on and Kassem (2004) explore the benefits that the reflective nature of story and narrative can bring to extremely traumatised situations through their work with the 'To Reflect and Trust (TRT)' storytelling group in Israel. In a similar way, Viewpoints Theatre (Alon, Kuftinec & Turkiyye, 2010) who work with Israeli and Palestinian youth in Gaza, focus on creative collaboration through the medium of embodied storytelling; working with narratives that have become etched under the skin of the population, echoing Kemp's (2001) concept of narratives being aesthetically embodied.

In both cases, reflecting on work they have done with traumatised students the authors show how the participants in their bi-national sessions were able to co-create learning possibilities through the sharing of embodied narratives (Dennis, 2007; Simmons, 2006b), understanding more about the internal differences that existed within the group of both nationalities (Alon et al., 2010).

Gersie & King's (1990) work on therapeutic storytelling processes explored the challenges associated with transition processes, indicating that inevitably it is human nature to question the reason for change, as well as questioning ourselves, our purpose, our meaning. Making sense of these questions, they argue, can be done through narrative and story creation. In creating stories, the individual is enabling themselves to get to the heart of the inner world created by the teller (Fels, 2009a, 2009b; Kemp, 2001). Getting to the point of a shared understanding requires connection and clarity from the teller in order to project their message. However, it also requires insight and connection from those listening; embodying the story through analogically boot-strapping the experiences to their own sense memories (Fels, 1998, 2009a; Gentner, 2010; Kurtz et al., 2001). The role of the listener is therefore a vital part of the collaborative process and is explored further below.

2.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING IN CO-CREATION AND TELLING

As stories are told, a co-creative relationship develops between teller and listener which effects change in the story structure and content based on the influence of the listener in the act of exchange (Forest, 2009; Lakoff and Johnson, 2003; Norum, 2006). Similar to the idea of Bruner's (1990, 1996) spiral learning process, each iteration of narrative brings a new way of viewing the same material and feedback from the range of listeners the story is told to will shape the language and framing of the story as it progresses onwards to other individuals or through other communities. A third dimension in the co-creation relationship would be the creator of the story. This individual is not always the storyteller and therefore has a separate but inherently connected relationship with the story process. A good example of this is the story referred to earlier in this chapter about Hilda Stern Cohen, a concentration camp survivor (Tyler & Rosen, 2008). Originally written in 2003 by Gail Rosen, Hilda's story *Change Hope* has been performed by Rosen in a number of venues around the world and within a number of different communities. In each performance, the voice of the teller embeds itself further into the story and as the story moves on to a new community,

the emotional responses from the audience find their way into the fabric of the tale as a crucial part of the story development.

The way in which Rosen (*ibid*) chose to craft *Change Hope* has enabled multiple connections to be made, not only by Rosen as the teller but also by the communities that have heard and been part of the storytelling-creating experience. Abma (2003) reflects this communal connection by reiterating the importance of storytelling as a social event, regardless of community locus. Rosen indicates that she has learned as much about her own values, beliefs, ideals as she has about Hilda Cohen's, and as the story passes on the telling of the story will drive forward further changes.

The listener in the storytelling process is a partner and co-creator. The very act of listening liberates the story from the confines of text or memory (Dennis, 2007; Razack, 1993). Through that liberation, connections can be made. Stories evoke responses in the listener that emerge as their senses are aroused. How stories are heard, felt and seen impact on how the teller engages in the literary dance. Such strong connections to stories come about because of the human need to connect; as previously discussed stories are social constructs (Abma, 2003; Beirne & Knight, 2007; Done et al., 2011; Pässilä et al., 2015). Yashinsky explores how stories evoke deep connections within the listener as he recounts the tale of a friend hearing a storyteller at work:

> *"[the teller] was totally gone from that patch of sunlight, and in itsplace was the Norwegian ship on a blue, blue sea."* (2008, p.239).

The sharing of stories, particularly the kind of self-stories Denzin refers to (1989a), is a sharing of trust. Stories create links between people; the bridges in the borderlands that Dennis (2007) refers to, connecting concepts and mapping experiences. Sharing stories brings with it a growing familiarity and an acceptance of each other as equal participants in the process (Simmons, 2006). There can also be a deeper link and an alternative, sometimes oppositional, perspective that needs to be taken, one that views the story or narrative as a container for the individual's deepest needs, hopes, desires, fears and can generate anxiety in the teller as they lay these

feelings bare to the listener (Fook & Gardner, 2007; Gersie & King, 1990; Stuart, 2001). The relationship between teller and listener therefore becomes a precious thing and the stories told will emerge in the space created between teller and listener (Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990); an aesthetic space offering a degree of distance and a glimpse into another world where ordinary reality is suspended and another arguably fictional and dramatic reality exists instead (Pendzik, 2003, 2013). Gersie and King's (1990) exploration of the potency of story is important in understanding how both teller and listener are connected through their interpretation of the story shared. The story created and told represents an individual's past and present experiences; but through the telling these experiences become shared, evoking emotions, senses and memories in the listener (Coetzee, 2009). Epistemologically, this process enables the construction of new knowledge for both teller and listener, achieved through the dialogic interaction that storytelling provides. Trust is key to this experience as the listener must be trusting that the teller will guide them through this other-worldness of the story back to their known world once the story has ended (Simmons, 2006b).

Listening in pairs offers intimate connection through a simple partnered approach. Listening in groups can create tensions that limit the ability for trust to be built easily, leaving teller and listener stranded in the borderlands that Dennis (2007) refers to. In order to work through the challenges of group reluctance, Gersie (1997) highlights the benefit of "harnessing the listener" as active participant in the response process and this can be done with specific moments of creativity and expression. Importantly, fictionalised story and narrative offers the individual a safe degree of distance between the real world situation explored in the story and the fictionalisation of the situation (Fels, 2009b, 2012; Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990; Landy, 2003; Pendzik, 2008, 2013; Tyler & Rosen, 2008). The idea of having distance from the 'ownership' of your story provides an important aesthetic space in which to explore 'what if' questions and is a way of contextualising and understanding our world (Rogers, 2012a). Informally, this is actually a way of thinking that is common-place; formalising it through a defined

reflective process benefits the individual by a focus on capturing the new knowledge that emerges from the reflective moment.

2.7 SUMMARY

The preceding exploration of storytelling and narrative has highlighted a number of important points, and invoking a ‘stop’ moment, as suggested by Appelbaum (1995) and referred to frequently in the work of Fels (for example, 2012, 2015), will enable these to be consolidated and summarised in order to move forward.

Narrative and story are not interchangeable in terms of their meaning (Abbott, 2008; Cobley, 2014) and yet they are often used interchangeably, for example Herman’s (2009) view of narrative as a cognitive and textual experience in which he uses the words ‘narrative’ and ‘story’ in explaining the same concept. Narrative suggests a broader concept; metaphorically, a container through which past experiences are viewed (Abbott, 2008; Allbon, 2012; Livo & Rietz, 1986). These past experiences form the stories that an individual tells in the process of understanding and defining their personal narrative (Allbon, 2012; Fels, 2009a, 2012, 2015).

In the development of one’s personal narrative, historical experiences can emerge, pushing forwards to create ante-narratives. These are collections of stories that have come before the central narrative, and which are necessarily fragmented and unstructured, appearing as tag lines on surfacing memories (Allbon, 2012; Boje, 2001, 2006).

Stories and narratives often include creative and visual references; metaphors to enable linkages to be made for both the practitioner reflecting on their experiences and the reader or listener to the story (Hunt, 2001; Kemp, 2001; Maich et al., 2000; Newton, 2000). Ramsey (2005) refers to the creative capacity for narrative to move beyond the descriptive and into that which isn’t seen; essentially narrative offers more than just a way of knowing, it enables reflexive processes to become embodied action. Stories and narratives are shared experiences, engaging the senses through aesthetic processing and enabling embodied reflexive practice to occur through the lived narrative generated by both teller(s) and listener(s). The role of the

listener in the storytelling process has been highlighted as a vital element of the reflective experience as the sharing of stories can provide support and comfort (Coetzee, 2009; Simmons, 2006b).

Sharing can also provide moments of danger for the creator/teller as they lay themselves open to criticism and censure (Fook, 2010; Fook and Gardner, 2007). The act of critically reflexive storytelling could arguably be seen as a courageous one (Fels, 2009a). The literature suggests that there can be anxiety in the part of the teller in group settings, unsure of how their actions will be interpreted (Fook, 2010; Pässilä et al., 2015). There is also the danger that the story created/told provides a reflective process akin to what Kemp (2001) terms a “confessional narrative”, offering neither depth nor development but instead simply a way to unburden the self and move forward without any lasting form of change.

Providing a way of engaging transformational learning through embodied reflexive processes is therefore integral to ensuring a deeper epistemological shift. This shift is arguably therapeutic in nature, requiring a fundamental change in the way an individual thinks and acts as a result of their reflexive experience. In this section, this act of transformation has been linked to creating and the aesthetic processes (Beirne & Knight, 2007; Coetzee, 2009; Gersie & King, 1990;Kemp, 2001; Pässilä et al., 2015), with the need for a degree of distance to be present enabling the teller and listener to explore new knowledge. Connecting embodied reflexivity through aesthetics and therapeutic dramaturgy provides a way of understanding aesthetic distance and the personal transformation/therapeutic connection; these are briefly considered in the next part of this literature review.

2.8 AESTHETIC DISTANCE IN STORYTELLING AND THE THERAPEUTIC CONNECTION

Aesthetic distance has been a recurring theme within the literature about storytelling (Banks-Wallace et al., 2007; Dennis, 2007; Fels, 2009a; Forest, 2009; Norum, 2006; Tyler & Rosen, 2008). Having the ability to distance oneself from the storytelling process can be important for the need to create trust within groups to enable them to share honestly (Pässilä et al., 2015;

Stuart, 2001) or because of the process of writing creatively, adding an element of fictionalising the narrative, requires the ability to remain one-step-removed from the actual story (Hunt, 2001).

Aesthetic distance is a common term used within dramatherapeutic frameworks (for example, Gersie, 1997 and Gersie & King, 1990; Jones, 2007; Jennings, 1998; Landy 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2011).Johnson (2011) defines aesthetic distance as the balance between form – the manner of expressing self – and feeling – the engagement of personal experiences into the form. Too much of either will create too much distance – form heavy – or too little – feeling heavy. Taking on a role enables an individual to embody a fictional identity that is not their usual form (Jones, 2007). In doing this, the client creates a distance that enables them to think about themselves and their interactions from the safety of an aesthetic space. Pendzik (2011) refers to this as dramatic reality; a potential space, not in existence but rather in imagination. In Boalian work, aesthetic distance is created in the communal representation of shared story within an aesthetic space (Boal, 1995; Forgasz, 2014). This space is an emotional and cognitive one, where acting and spectating meet to overlap creating tellers as listeners and listeners as tellers in dramatic story (Boal, 1973/1979, 1995). The shared story becomes one that all can 'own' but from the safety of one step removed; 'this is not me but it is of me.'

When we create and share stories, we become open to the thoughts, views, perceptions, judgements of others, (Gersie & King, 1990). Because of this, there needs to be trust in the process of telling a story and a feeling of safety regardless of the setting. Abma (2003) reflects on the safety issue in her work with storytelling workshops in organisations, using only groups with existing knowledge of each other. While potentially offering a safe space for dialogue, the situation is also restrictive offering no wider insights borne out of connecting with those beyond the circle of known connections. Another way of creating a safe space and an aesthetic distance would be through fictionalising personal story. This approach is evident in Boal's (1995) work on therapeutic practices, engaging image theatre techniques in the development of abstract visual pictures created by participants in group

sessions, essentially sharing their own stories corporeally in order to create a socially constructed narrative (Forgasz, 2014; Linds & Vettraino, 2008; Pässilä et al., 2015; Vettraino and Linds, 2015).Externalising story in this way can change the direction of the narrative by giving a physical representation of something internally 'known' or held. The Boalian concept of Metaxis, referred to earlier in this chapter, provides a useful connection between the reality of the physical world occupied by an individual, and the 'reality' provided by their inner or alternative world. When working within moment, the actor (this individual can be thought of as the storyteller) and character the actor is playing within the story, are both one in the same person, and yet their view points, their attitudes, behaviours are different (Linds, 2006). This separation enables greater understanding to take place as the actor is able to observe the character in action and learn from their own behaviours.

The concept of metaxis is not something restricted to the actor on the stage but rather shared, communal moments of transformation as spect-actor, actor and character develop through the embodiment of role (Boal, 1995). In re-visioning experiences within a fictional context, participants of group story exploration have the opportunity to stand back from their realities and view them, as though through a 'stop motion' lens, finding moments of clarity and opportunities for change or transformation. Through the characters and tasks created in fictive realities, individuals are able to identify and explore different ways of thinking and behaving without the need to share openly their actual realities. The meanings taken from the physical discourse engaged with during the story process would enable them to construct and play with alternative ways of knowing and being in these stories. In meaning making through physical action, our bodies become sites of knowing (Linds, 2006).

Within Dramatherapy this is known as embodiment, shifting one's sense of knowing from the internal to the external to create new ways of knowing (Bird, 2010). Literally 'putting it out there' enables the individual and/or group to separate internal anxieties about the story and reflect upon it in a different way. The application of dramaturgical methods to the process of introspection and the observation of self enables individuals to offer an

embodied response to experiences. This response can be individualized or created as part of a collective whole, opening up a physical dialogue and shared perspective on any given experience. Boje (2006) would link this to Bakhtin's (Bakhtin, 1968/1984, and Morson, 1986; Todorov, 1984) concept of multiple voices within a story emanating not from the author of the story but from the characters created within the story. Viewing the story through the eyes of another, enables something different to be produced (Robinson, 2011)

Multiple perspectives on the content of a story form part of the core processes of dramatherapeutic practice (for example, Jones, 2007; Jennings, 1988) and arguably there are many voices that are heard within the telling of any one story. As in Bakhtin's work (Bakhtin, 1968/1984; Morson, 1986; Todorov, 1984), the dialogue exists between the characters and therefore the structure of narrative is broken by the unending interaction that exists between these characters, creating multiple entry and exit points into the text and the story as a whole. The idea of polyphonous dialogism is supported by Boje (2001, 2006, 2008) who defines a plot line or story structure that has a beginning, middle and end as too linear and constrictive, not following the reality of life and lived narratives. However, all narratives contain particular structural elements (Herman,2009; Ochs & Capps, 2001). Although one might relate one's narrative(s) in a non-linear form within the process of reflecting on one's experiences, the story(s) created have a structure with particular elements evident.

Boje (2001, 2006) manoeuvres around the idea of story structure by suggesting the emerging dialogic story is a co-created experience that is shared by many and that emerges spontaneously through dialogue. Allbon (2012) picks up on this concept through her own internal dialogic processes, weaving ante-narratives together with current experience and providing a form of aesthetic distance from which to view her development. Understanding that personal story may not have a set structure and format appears oppositional to the concept of how we construct narratives and the way in which archetypal stories have developed historically. The following section therefore explores story structure and also considers the patterns that

exist in individuals' and groups' story telling processes. Reconnecting story structure with archetypal forms of narrative and roles within narratives also provides a link to the way in which story enables reflexive processing. And finally, linking all of these elements to the forms of dramaturgical processes discussed earlier that enable embodied reflexive practice to occur.

2.9 STRUCTURING STORY AND NARRATIVE

Earlier in this chapter, the words 'narrative' and 'story' were defined through considering their etymological origin; story from 'historia' meaning an investigation into past events, and narrative from 'narrativus' meaning the telling of a story. Another view of story and narrative could be taken as that of myth from the Greek word 'mythos', meaning traditional story. Kearney (2002) explores this explanation of story and narrative referring to the mimetic function of both historical and fictional narratives, as being vehicles through which the world around us is recreated and re-formed. It is therefore possible to state that historical and/or fictional narratives (or myths) are created as storied explorations into previous and possible actions, and then offered through the cognitive container of narrative as a way of understanding the world.

Consideration of some of the discourse around structuring narratives and stories enables the identification of patterns emerging between stories. Herman (2009) believes that all narratives have a number of features which are present in every story created. These are:

- Situated – meaning that the narrative or story was developed for a specific reason or occasion for telling;
- Sequenced – that the events within the narrative had a structure of time and particular activities or events;
- World making or world disrupting – that events within the narrative would unsettle the equilibrium of the world somehow;
- Felt – that the narrative managed to convey what it was like to live through the unsettlement.

In other words, there is a pattern of elements which, when present, evoke narrative or story worlds which are particularly marked by the occurrence of disruption causing events (Herman, 2009). Ochs & Capps (2001) believe that, rather than having fixed elements or features, narratives and stories contain a set of dimensions that they refer to as:

- Tellership – this focuses on narrative as having the potential for multiple tellers (multiple authors and tellers reflects the multiple perspective view of narrative suggested initially by Bakhtin (Bakhtin, 1968/1984; Todorov, 1984) and by Boje (2001);
- Tellability – the context of the story told and the social dimension within that storytelling process;
- Embededness – the extent of linkage made within the storytelling process, how the story is embedded in the lived experiences of those participating in the process. Horsdal (2012) takes this a stage further by referring to cultural embeddedness; the extent to which a narrative is part of the cultural landscape of the teller/listener dynamic;
- Linearity – the movement in and around storytelling. Non-linearity gives scope for multiple perspectives and also reflects reality (a view supported by Allbon (2012) and Boje (2009, 2001);
- Moral stance – the moral perspective(s) or framework(s) with which the narrative is being interpreted.

Leading on from this, Kearney's (2002) view is that every act of storytelling involves:

- Someone (a teller)
- Telling something (a story)
- To someone (a listener)
- About something (a real or imagined world)

Kearney (2002) proposes that the story process is an interactive one, requiring action on the part of those participating; the listener(s) being aware of a narrator, the narrative being told with the multiplicity of characters within the story(s) and the narrative interpreter, reframing the narrative heard within

their own world and then returning it to narrator/teller through verbal and non-verbal actions. This chimes with Ochs and Capps' (2001) view that the story told is defined by its ability to connect with those listening in a way that is embedded in their own schematic understanding of the world.

Boje's (2001, 2008) work on story and narrative offers a very different perspective of story and narrative structure. He argues against the idea that story is narrative; separating out the two terms as does Cobley (2014). Although stopping short of defining narrative as a container for story, Boje indicates that narrative is a way of bringing stories meaningfully together (2001). Arguing against story being structured and containing the types of features Herman (2009) ascribes to story, Boje identifies stories as antenarratives, creations that are complex, disorganised, fragmented and multi-layered (Allbon, 2012; Boje, 2001, 2006). In the structuring of personal stories, there are often gaps and spaces where knowledge is not coherently formed. In these stories, events and actions happen out of sequence and in the attempt to retrospectively make sense of an experience, the linear time line often shifts (Boje, 2001, 2006). Boje's antenarrative has a number of features that link to Ochs and Capps (2001) view of dimensions within story. Viewed through Vásquez' (2007) sliding scale of possibilities, there are strong correlations between Boje's (2001) open, multiple voiced and non-linear antenarrative and Ochs and Capps (2001) multiple teller, embedded and uncertain narrative dimensions. However, while Boje's (2001) antenarrative concept appears to identify an unstructured and emergent storytelling process, it also conforms to an element of structural insight. Herman's (2009) elements of situatedness, world making or world disrupting and felt experience are still evident in an antenarrative and even the sequential feature is present but in an order understood only by the teller. The antenarrative acts almost as a foreword to the narrative, giving it richness and detail.

It is possible to map the models suggested above into the way in which story and narrative is structured through the plots and/or themes that exist in story development. Booker's comprehensive text (2004) identifies that there are seven basic plot lines that exist in every story. A summary of these can

be seen in Table 2.1. These plot lines map to story themes that have historically been situated within many world cultures and form part of the traditional understanding of the sociological make up of many different human landscapes (Bruner, 1996; Roesler, 2006). All of these plot lines contain the model of narrative development described in the three approaches of Boje (2001), Herman (2009) and Ochs and Capps (2001). Kearney's (2002) approach is to storytelling as an action rather than the creation of story structure and therefore it is not linked here.

Table 2.1: Booker's (2004) Seven Basic Plot Lines

Plot Line	Description
Overcoming the Monster	The hero battling against an evil and all powerful monster, one that threatens destruction on all that comes into its realm. The hero must confront the monster and kill it, thus ending its power
Rags to Riches	Ordinary individuals who become extraordinary, often because of fate, luck or the changing fortunes of those around them
The Quest	*"No type of story is more recognisable to us than the Quest."* (Booker, 2004, p.69). In this plot line there is an end goal; a treasure, a beautiful princess, a golden fleece. The hero or heroine must journey far and for a long time, overcoming numerous obstacles to finally succeed in their quest
Voyage and Return	Taken into another world, an experience far outside their own understanding of reality, the hero or heroine is initially enthralled and enchanted but gradually becomes fearful and trapped, escaping eventually back to the comfort of their familiar existence. They are forever changed by the experience of their unexpected journey
Comedy	Often involving chaos and confusion, this plot line explores both dark and light characters and often involves a love interest connecting the hero and heroine which ends well
Tragedy	In its *"blackest and most basic form."* (Booker, 2004, p.157) tragedy explores the connections between the patterns that all stories are formed with and real life, where events echo the

	stages of tragic development. The cycle tragic stories follow is anticipation stage, dream stage, frustration stage, nightmare stage, destruction stage
Rebirth	Rebirth stories involve a dive into darkness for the hero or heroine. What separates this type of plot line from Tragedy is the injection of a *"light stealing in on the darkness"* (Booker, 2004, p.204) in the form of a vision or event usually involving a Young Woman/Innocent Young Girl or Child, which drags the hero or heroine back to life

What is also significant in the outline from Booker's (2004) work is the emphasis on archetypal story structures and themes as well as the connection with archetypal roles.

2.10 ARCHETYPES – STORY STRUCTURE AND ROLES

Metaphor and the conjuring of storied image is an important part of understanding the Jungian concept of archetype. Jung believed that archetypal patterns tied up in the personal stories or scripts that individuals create for themselves, could influence the direction of an individual's life story (Roesler, 2006). Frequently, metaphorical explanation is used to define and expand upon by Jung. For example, in his explanation of the unconscious as the home of archetypes he refers to it as the *"deposit of all human experience"* but also goes on to clarify that it is not *"…indeed, a dead deposit, a sort of abandoned rubbish heap, but a living system of reactions and aptitudes that determine the individual's life in invisible ways – all the more effective because invisible."* (Jung, 1970, p.83).

To explore this a stage further, consideration of the Jungian concept of 'the complex' explains how human experiences of behaviours, attitudes and processes are connected internally via a deep rooted system of linked knowledge; knowledge that can be known consciously but also that can be understood instinctively, physically, emotionally. Linked to Varela's concept of 'know-how', the intuitive within us that enables us to know how to respond to given situations and the capacity to cope with the unexpected (Varela,

1999); the deep rooted knowledge therefore driving behaviourist reactions to every-day situations.

Stimulating the complexes within our inner psyche often triggers a physical manifestation, ie: feeling goose bumps at the telling of a horror story on Halloween; so closely aligned is our physical and emotional connection. Ochs and Capps (2001) would suggest that this evidences a closely embedded context for participants in the narrative process. In the same way the act of story creation as well as the telling can evoke the associative recollections Jung referred to. This symbiotic link is explored in therapeutic storytelling and narrative work where through the creation of story the creator becomes accountable for the imaginary world we create (Gersie, 1997, 2003a; Gersie & King, 1990). Through the creation of the aesthetic space that imagination provides, story creators can consider alternative realities and also have a degree of distance from which to observe their existing realities with a critical eye (Gersie & King, 1990; Jones, 2007; Landy, 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2011). Gersie & King (1990, and Gersie, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c) explore this in their development of story structures that enable the individual or group teller(s) to examine their inner worlds through a mythmaking framework that consists of a number of themes as can be seen in Table 2.2.

Throughout all of these themes runs the pattern of engaging or entering into an experience, an interaction with another in order to move forward. They are also frequently about physical or metaphorical journeys; setting off for new beginnings, trusting in the help of others and working through challenges and barriers to achieve a goal. Another thread throughout each theme is the passage of time; literally or metaphorically. Tree themed stories speak of strength and shelter, care and determination, and growth over time that leads to rebirth through the dying and replanting of the tree seed.

Correlating Booker's (2004) work with Gersie and King's (1990) mythmaking structures, some clear parallels arise. The themes of The Tree and The Trickster roles can be seen reflected in the roles constituent within the plot lines that focus on heroic action or shadowy misfortune. Both Booker's (*ibid*) plot lines and the thematic therapeutic story conventions in

Gersie and King's (*ibid*) work share similar constructions or structures; some rallying to action or purposeful beginning, elements of difficulty or new experiences in the middle,

Table 2.2: Archetypal Story Structures

Thematic therapeutic story structure	Description
Beginnings	'Beginning' myths evoke a sense of choice in terms of direction, the setting off on a journey where one path has been chosen over another. Beginning also connects with the idea of creation and new life
Passages	'Passage' myths evoke a sense of journey and potentially quest. These myths tell the listener of the *"passing and the constant"* (Gersie & King, 1990, p.81), the ebb and flow of life with all of the adventures and silences that entails
Knots	*"The knot is an interruption in the smooth flow of a thread"* (Gersie & King, 1990, p.121) showing how easily that which is steady and straightforward can be turned on its head. Knots can be difficult to untie and painful to be in as they restrict and contain
The Tree	'Tree' myths represent strength and solidity; an understanding of the need to be still as well as to move
The Trickster	'Trickster' myths are paradoxical in nature; the trickster is an essential in life to ensure balance and yet it can destroy as quickly as it heals. The trickster often reveals that which the listener does not want to know or hear
Healing	'Healing' myths tell the story of reliance, the need to trust and the capacity of others to help. Those needing help have to allow others in and from the point of the request, the person helping becomes a healer
Return and Beginnings	In relation to beginning, return is to go backwards but into the future. Having been shaped by a journey from which one returns, that knowledge is taken onwards to something new

and a resolution of some kind at the end. The Rebirth and Voyage and Return plot lines and the Return and Beginnings theme connect through the concept of shared experiences that prompt change on returning to the known world. Beginnings, Passage and Knots all have an element of Quest and Voyage and Return in them.

Gersie and King's (*ibid*) themes also link to the construct of the archetypal role, The Tree and The Trickster suggesting this in particular. The Tree; a solid, dependable being, at one with nature and changing with the environment, and The Trickster; a mischief making 'spirit', fearless in its decisions, mostly because it cannot and does not reflect on possibilities but instead acts on impulse. In Booker's (*ibid*) work on the basic plot lines, it is possible to track the development of particular roles very clearly. In relation to tragic stories, for example, he refers to four types of victims who will generally suffer as a result of the hero's recklessness in a tragic story; these are:

- The Good Old Man
- The Rival
- The Innocent Young Girl
- The Temptress

There is a very clear connection between the roles Booker identifies and the roles that are identified as archetypal within a Jungian framework. In the construction and telling of stories, each story or metaphorical construct will have some element of foundation within the archetypal figures or events known intuitively or instinctively by the teller; just as those participating as 'listeners' to the story will interpret the story heard through the framework of archetypal images consciously or sub-consciously held by them. The roles Booker (*ibid*) refers to can be mapped to Jungian archetypal roles as seen in Table 2.3a.

Table 2.3a: Archetypal Role Comparison

Booker's (2004) roles	**Jungian archetype**
The Good Old Man	The Wise Old Man
The Rival	Possibly The Rebel or The Shadow
The Innocent Young Girl	The Child or the Maiden
The Temptress	Linked to the lowest denomination in Jungian archetype of the anima/animus, the Temptress links to Eve and is herself a dark figure

Historically, the links between story creation and archetypal roles or character creation can be traced back to the work of Vladimir Propp. Propp's seminal text *Morphology of the Folktale* was first published in Russian in 1928 and then translated into English in 1958 and 1968. Propp (1928/1968) developed a set of dramatis personae, or characters/actors that enable the action in a story to unfold. Implicit in his work was an understanding that following the events and actions of these dramatis personae as they embark on adventures, meet and overcome obstacles and return home (Propp's folktales always had optimistic endings) would enable the listener/reader to connect with the behaviours of the characters and thereby engage their own unconscious archetypes to bring forth into 'battle' in their own lives. (Lamberg & Pajonen, 2005).

The dramatis personae that Propp uncovered were:

- The hero
- The dispatcher (who gives the hero his task)
- The princess (whom the hero wants)
- The princess' father
- The villain (someone acting against the hero)
- The provider (someone that gives the hero things to help him)
- The helper (someone who actively helps the hero)

- The anti-hero (someone who tries to take the hero's place or who takes something from the hero)

Mapping these to Jung's story archetypes (1970), Booker's (2004) tragic character identification and Gersie & King's (1990) therapeutic story themes demonstrates a clear connection between these chronologically separate theorists – see Table 2.3b.

Table 2.3b: Archetypal Role Comparison

Propp's Dramatis Personae (1968)	**Jungian story archetypes (1964)**	**Gersie & King's (1990) therapeutic story themes**	**Booker's tragic characters (2004)**
The Hero	The Hero		
The Princess	The Maiden		The innocent Young Girl
The Princess' Father	The Wise Old Man		The Good Old Man
The Dispatcher			
	The Magician		
The Provider	The Earth Mother	The Tree	
The Helper			
The Villain*	The Sorceress or Temptress		The Temptress
The Anti-Hero*	The Trickster	The Trickster	The Rival*

*Potentially linked to the equivalent role in Jung's archetypal story roles

Each of these personae had their own 'sphere of action' in which they would operate, or their sphere of action to interact with and influence other characters' spheres of action. A third possibility was that a single sphere of action could encompass a number of personae (Herman, 2009; Lamberg & Pajonen, 2005). In other words interaction between the personae in the

narrative catalysed the narrative, enabling it to move forwards. In 1959, Lucien Tesnière enhanced the dramatis personae construct by considering all objects as potential subjects of the action (Tesnière, 1959/2015). As actants rather than personae, any animate or inanimate person or object had significant influence on the process of the story. For example, a story involving a child riding a bicycle to school would have multiple potential actants, including the child, the bicycle, the road or pavement and so on.

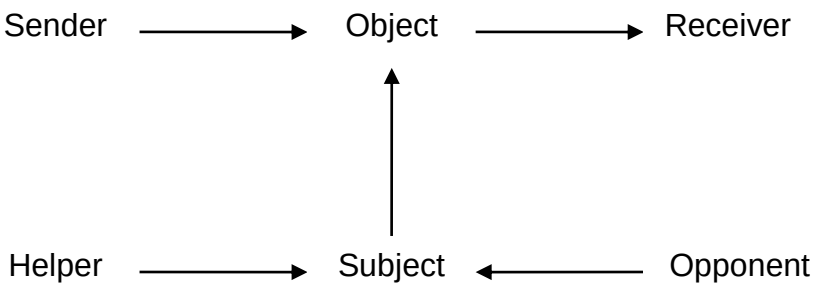
All aspects of a story scene are therefore relevant and useful and indeed linking to Kemp's (2001) research into using creative writing processes for reflective practice, many of the activities used utilised normally peripheral colours, shapes and objects as key focus features for the writing to develop a greater sense of knowing and observation. Nothing within an event or situation, therefore, is there without design, conscious or otherwise (Boal, 1995, 2003; Goffman, 1990). This links further to the work of Algidas Greimas, a semiotician who took Tesnière's concept of the actant further and created a system that simplified the original into six actants; subject, object, sender, receiver, opponent and helper; he wrote about these in his seminal text *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method* (1966). Significantly, Greimas (1966/1983) linked these in a symbiotic relationship, showing clear connections between pairs within a story that enabled action to be forthcoming.

Herbert (2011) explores this Actantial Relationship further by defining three axes in which these relationships exist:

- The axis of desire – subject/object
- The axis of power – helper/opponent
- The axis of transmission – sender/receiver

A visual representation of this organisational structure can be seen in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Organisation of Actantial Relationship



Greimas (1966/1983) believed that this way of structuring fairytales was applicable to all stories and that central to the process was the relationship between the subject and the object – the hero of the story and the task the hero has to undertake. Archetypal roles feature in this construct of story development as Greimas mentions the hero and the anti-hero, linking to Propp's (1928/1968), Jung's (1970) and Jung & Franz (1964) hero role, and the anti-hero, connecting with Propp (1928/1968), Jung's (1970), Jung and Franz (1964) and Booker's (2004) villain, trickster or rival roles. This provides a link between the historical construct of story structuring (Greimas, 1966/1983; Herbert, 2011; Jung, 1970; Propp, 1928/1968) and the place and purpose of archetypal roles in the creation of stories and narratives to the contemporary literature on how stories are thematically structured and developed (Booker, 2004; Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990).

Crucially, the connection between thematic story, story structure and archetypal roles is also fundamental to understanding the narratives created by individuals in the process of 'reflecting-in-action'. If stories are constructed, whether in a linear or non-linear fashion (Boje, 2001; Herman, 2009; Ochs & Capps, 2001), around the context of the story creator and potentially the teller(s) and listener(s) – as in an the context of a group or organisation, for example (Boje, 2001; Gabriel, 2000; Gabriel & Connell, 2010) – the story is embedded in that cultural context (Roesler, 2006) or

potentially reframed in the development of a new epistemological event; Horsdal (2012) refers to this as cultural re-embedding. Connecting story, archetype, individual and world making/disruption (Herman, 2009) forms a heuristic link between the individual (and the group/collective/environment), the story, an understanding of self – as archetypal role, embedded within a cultural context.

The linkages described above reinforce the spaces for embodied reflexive practice and show the opportunities for learning through and around the story(s) created (Cunliffe, 2002, 2004; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004; Fels, 2009a, 2009b; Kinsella 2009). Understanding the thematic structures of story creation can also enable individuals to understand patterns in their personal narratives (Booker, 2004; Gersie & King, 1990; Ochs & Capps, 2001; Roesler, 2006), as can an appreciation of the place and purpose of role archetypes in the development of cultural storytelling (Jung, 1970; Lamberg & Pajonen, 2005; Landy, 1993, 2001, 2003; Propp, 1928/1968).

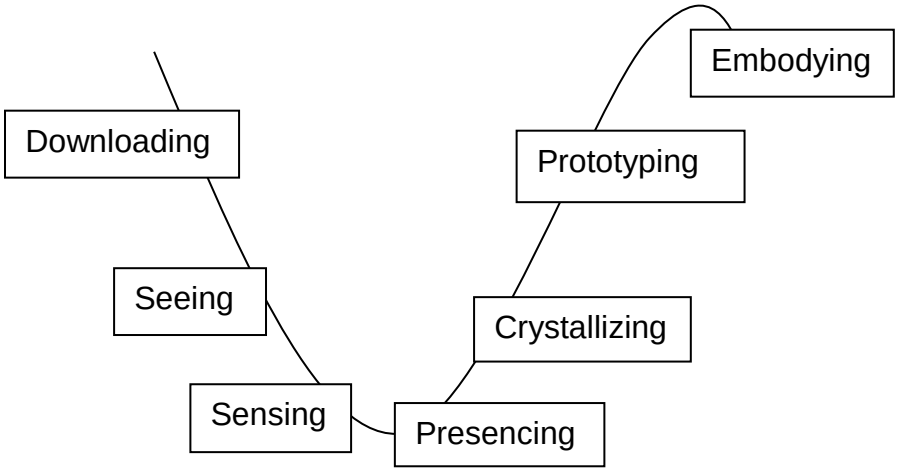
As has already been stated earlier in this chapter, critical reflexive practice enables the individual to map together divergent life experiences into a coherent narrative. Roesler (2006) refers to this as forming an "interconnected whole" (pp.575); drawing together identity and making sense of experiences in order to create oneness. Understanding the connection between archetypal story patterns and critical reflexivity enables the individual to become consciously aware of the behavioural choices they are making (Roesler, 2006). In this conscious choice making process, reflexive individuals are physically aware, senses heightened by the possibilities so that experiences do not happen passively to them but are instead lived and drawn out from them (Linds, 2008).

A number of autoethnographic authors have detailed their experiences of heightened physical manifestations of reflexive moments. For example, Stuart (2001) writes of her physical response to a student's written reflection of feeling under threat, Finlay (2005) and Coetzee (2009) evidence a physical connection with their participants' embodied experiences as they work through dialogical relationships creating new knowledge as part of a

dramaturgical process of interaction. Sutherland's (2012) research into aesthetic reflexivity also emphasises the importance of an aesthetic, sensory awareness of learning in action by mapping reflexive processes to a Theory U (Scharmer, 2007) model of reflection – see Figure 2.3 (see Appendix E for a description of Theory U).

The aesthetic forms part of the process for embodied practice within drama and theatre work. Coetzee (2009) and Rowe (2008) both reference the metaphor of dance and movement within their research into collective reflexive practice, the former focused on developing self identity through performative inquiry. Fels (2008, 2009b) explores this further in her work on performative inquiry within role drama, underlying the place and purpose of dramaturgical methodology as a collective learning system which is complex in nature as it involves co-creation of embodied reflexive learning moments. Dramaturgical methodologies also provide the focus for lived storied experiences in the empirical research of, for example, Beirne and Knight (2007), Boje et al. (2015), Forgasz (2014) and Pässilä et al. (2015). All four pieces of research focus on the use of Boalian methodology (see, in particular, Boal, 1995 and 2003) as a vehicle for reflective practice, arguing for a depth of critical reflexivity through embodied action.

Figure 2.3: Theory U – Scharmer (2007)



Pässilä et al.'s (2015) research into the use of applied drama techniques to disrupt existing practice and gain opportunities for collective reflexivity engages the participant in a storytelling process that has been developed through careful research to form a script which is then rehearsed and performed by actors. Arguably the purpose of their research was to disrupt the dominant political discourses about power and position that exist in the public health care system they are writing about and to create situations of perplexity. Utilising verbal and non verbal dramatic processes and the creation of fictionalised dramatic pieces based on stories collected from a range of sources, allows for a degree of aesthetic distancing (Jones, 2007; Landy, 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2011) and, although Pässilä et al. (2015) claim a post-Boalian methodological approach, their intention is the same as Boal's original concept; they are enabling the theatre of *the* oppressed as opposed to theatre of *one* oppressed (Boal, 1979, 1995, 2003) to explore a community's dilemmas.

Beirne and Knight's (2007) research into the use of Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1979) techniques within the education of management students also follows a co-created process. Beirne and Knight (2007) highlight the participant-centred approach to their learning process; although not to the extent of the heutagogical approach taken by Canning and Callan (2010) – heutagogy being the study and practice of self-determined learning, where participants determine their own direction and locus of knowledge gain. The purpose of the activities engaged in was to enable the management students to explore their experiences of and fears about management, engaging in shared reflective learning experiences. The safety of the space created for learning was enabled through the use of trained theatre practitioners and the authors take time to explain strategies used. The limitations of Beirne and Knight's (*ibid*) research lie in two areas; firstly, as the authors acknowledge, there was a lack of time given to their input with the students. Although there was considerable effort put into prior knowledge of community theatre practices, the students took part in only one two hour workshop (5% of their overall module input) acknowledged by the authors as unlikely to embed the learning in a longer term way (Beirne &

Knight, 2007). Secondly, as the students had not yet experienced management life, their stories focused on their fears and anxieties rather than on direct experience. As previously discussed, working with direct experiences enables an embodied reaction that supports deeper level reflection and, arguably, in-the-moment reflexive possibility (Cunliffe, 2002; Finlay, 2005).

Forgasz's (2014) research into the use of the Boalian technique *The Rainbow of Desires* to develop embodied reflexive processes in student teachers follows a similar process to that of Pässilä et al. (2015); the co-creation of reflexive learning through engaging in lived dramatic moments. In both cases there is a subjective embodiment that is evident as the participants explore their communally lived experiences through image theatre – in Forgasz's (2014) case, specifically the technique *The Rainbow of Desire* (Boal, 1995). Again, aesthetic distance is created, although this time that is managed through the use of non-verbal techniques enabling the participants to have a platform from which to reflect on the embodied experiences (Forgasz, 2014). However, there are limitations to Forgasz' work, not least of which is the brevity and lack of detail about the design of her study. There is no information about number or duration of sessions with the teaching students, nor of any longer term impact of the work on their capacity or confidence in reflexive practice.

Boje et al.'s (2015) paper on the use of Boalian methodology in leadership training offers an insight into the process they use to develop sessions with a mixture of individuals. The focus for Boje et al. (2015) is on relational leadership and they indicate the groups that they work with come from both inside and outside of the dominant power-leadership discourse operating within any given organisation. How this is supported by their process is not clear; nor is how these participants are 'chosen' to take part. As has already been discussed, the need for ensuring a degree of distance and safety within the reflexive space in which to explore challenging issues is paramount (Beirne & Knight, 2007; Landy, 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2011; Pässilä et al., 2015).

While the outcomes desired through the workshops Boje et al. (2015) facilitated are connected to co-creating new knowledge based on a process of embodied collective reflection, there is a lack of attention paid to how to hold or support the anxiety and discomfort of participants sharing their stories (Fook, 2010; Pässilä et al., 2015; Stuart, 2001) and no real evidence of any degree of distance or aesthetic space within which to manoeuvre safe reflexive moments (Linds, 2008; Vettraino, 2010; Vettraino and Linds, 2015). In addition, the 'storytelling theatrics' moniker for their work lends a superficial tone to a set of techniques that they argue are "not for the faint hearted" (Boje et al., 2015, pp.575). The word *theatrics* evokes an image of parlour games and exaggerated performance; indeed the definition of the plural verb is *"exaggerated, artificial or histrionic mannerisms"* (www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/theatrics). This appears oppositional to the heart of Boalian work which is the capacity for the community to share in social criticism and to engage actively in embodied discourse to affect change, nothing artificial about that. Arguably, Boje et al.'s (2015) work might be seen as adding the novelty value referred to by Beirne and Knight (2007) in management learning, although there is capacity for the approach to be more fully grounded in the ethical stance of Boalian theory.

2.11 LITERATURE REVIEW: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter, definitions of reflection, critical reflection and reflexivity have been explored. The latter focus has been on understanding story and narrative as part of the process of embodied reflexive practice. There is a lack of clarity about the use of the two terms 'story' and 'narrative', with a number of theorists using the terms interchangeably (for example Kearney 2002; Herman 2009). However, for the purposes of this research narrative is defined as a compilation of, or container of, a number of individual or group stories. Story is defined as being an individualised response to one or more than one experience that is shared with others by either the creator of the story or the teller of the story. The sharing of these stories can create narratives that can explain the cultural and societal development of the human landscape or environment within which the creator-teller-listener is situated.

Stories and narratives are also powerful vehicles through which learning is shared and new knowledge created. The use of story or narrative as a way of engaging individuals and groups in reflective and reflexive practices has indicated that commonly used methods, such as journal writing, portfolio development and personal or autoethnographic creation have mixed results with some individuals achieving valuable insight through embodied reflexive moments (Kemp, 2001; Stuart, 2001) and others struggling to develop capacity to reflect (Kemp, 2001; Otineh, 2011). Stories themselves, as narratives, have a structure to them; a way of developing which features certain elements such as some form of sequence, a number of events that provoke change and a sense of the feelings that were evoked in the story (Herman, 2009; Ochs & Capps, 2001). However, there is a compelling argument for a non-linear and unstructured approach to understanding story termed antenarrative (Boje, 2001, 2006) that allows for the messier and more fragmented aspects of an individual's life to be unpacked and then shaped with other events into a coherent narrative.

There is also a therapeutic element to storytelling brought about through connection to the traditional themes within stories that connect with archetypal images of the self (Booker, 2004; Jones, 2007; Jung, 1970; Jung and Franz, 1964; Propp, 1928/1968). Understanding this requires a focus on developing safety in the creating-telling-listening process through the development of aesthetic distance that enables the participants in the process to step out of their own story and view it from one step away (Beirne & Knight, 2007; Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990; Landy, 2011;Pässilä et al., 2015). One way of achieving this degree of distance is to work with fictionalised stories, created from the collective learning experiences of a group or from storytelling processes that evoke other storyworlds. While many storytelling processes described in the literature make use of fictionalised stories with groups, none use mythical or traditional story creation as part of that process.

In addition, a strong argument can be made to suggest that reflexive processes can be best developed through lived, physical events and that the use of dramaturgical methodologies to enable embodied experiences is

therefore essential to that process (Beirne & Knight, 2007; Boje et al., 2015; Coetzee, 2009; Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015).

2.12 MIND THE GAP!

What then is the gap in the learning and literature that this research aims to fill?

As mentioned above, the research around the use of story and narrative with groups and individuals to engage in embodied reflexive practices has focused predominantly on developing written responses to reflective tasks. Journal writing, portfolio development and elements of creative story telling in groups based on written experiences have formed the dominant discourse in this field. One gap in the literature, therefore, is a lack of structured storytelling process, focused on fictionalised and creative devised stories that are verbally or physically delivered rather than written. This storytelling process should enable and foster the development of pre-stories (the antenarrative that Allbon (2011) and Boje (2001, 2006) refer to, to emerge, adding to the original story told. The process should have structure to enable the aesthetic distancing required for safe processing and should also offer a way of engaging in an embodied, physical and reflexive manner where learning is lived and experienced as the storytelling unfolds.

The above then becomes the research focus for this study stemming from the literature reviewed to this point. In order to address that gap, and as a further part of the literature review, the focus is turned towards a story creating-telling process that originated from within the field of Dramatherapy known as the 6-Part-Story Method (6PSM). The following section explores the historical development of this method as well as the mechanics of how the method works. Following that section, the research question for this study will be stated leading onto the next chapter focusing on research process and methodology.

2.13 THE 6-PART-STORY METHOD

2.13.1 THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE 6 PART STORY METHOD

The 6-Part-Story Method (6PSM) originated from collaborative work between Mooli Lahad and Alida Gersie, his Dramatherapy tutor in the 1980s. Gersie(1990, 1997, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c), an Anglo-Dutch Dramatherapist, had developed a version of therapeutic story making which she termed SET (Story Evocation Technique). The structure of the approach was a question-based model with between seven and nine parts (Dent-Brown, 2001b, 2003, 2009; Landy, 2001, 2003; 2011), that allowed for a story 'skeleton' or framework to be developed that could then be added to. These techniques were designed in order to be therapeutic in their own right, and not as a form of assessment or diagnostic (Dent-Brown, 2003). Gersie (for example, 1997, and Gersie and King, 1990) reflected on the way in which stories created through the application of a mythmaking process could enable individuals and groups to identify common themes, patterns and ways forward. Her approach involved clients drawing, telling or performing a story with the following characteristics: landscape, character, dwelling place, obstacle, the 'helpmate' and the ending (Gersie, 1997, 2003a; Landy, 1991, 1993, 2003).

In her text with Nancy King (Gersie & King, 1990), Gersie and King offer a form of 'how to' guide to enable practitioners to generate problem solving activities through the creation of fictive narratives based on mythical stories. Each story created contains the possibility of a response to an implicit or explicitly stated issue or problem (Gersie & King, 1990), along with the method of how and what to do in order to turn around the pivotal choice making point within the tale. The therapist or practitioner's role is therefore to explore the myth along with other similar tales in order to enable the individual or participants within a group to connect with and make use of the information within the narrative.

From that point, Gersie (1997) continued building on the SET model and her work on Therapeutic Story Making (TSM). Gersie regards herself as both a teacher and a therapist and much of her work with groups using TSM has been developed through what she terms as 'storied doing and reflection' with

the purpose of sharing feelings, reflecting on challenges and revisiting them in order to offer resolution. The concept of the SET model was itself drawn from Gersie's research into the work of Vladimir Propp (1928/1968) discussed in the previous section (2.10), to understand the messages that these imparted through the groups and communities in which they were told (Bettelheim, 1976; Lamberg & Pajonen, 2005).

Although the 6PSM is a method well known in the field of Dramatherapy (for example, Dent-Brown, 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2009; Landy 2003, 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2008, 2011, 2013), there are relatively few publications that explore this approach. It has become more widely known because of a changing focus within Dramatherapy as a profession, looking to cement the development of a shared language and understanding of assessment practice in the field (Pendzik, 2003). However, 6PSM is still a model that exists very much within a Dramatherapy framework. Dent-Brown commented on the lack of research that existed (2001a) stating that although anecdotal evidence existed of the use of 6PSM, there was little empirical evidence. Pettit's research into the use of 6PSM to identify bullying victims and perpetrators offers some further research but Pettit acknowledges that there were no significant findings from this (2012).

In 2013, Lahad published a text focused on the development and use of the model he and Ayalon created to enable stories generated through the 6PSM to be understood and coping mechanisms to be identified; the BASIC Ph model (Lahad, Shacham & Ayalon, 2013). This text remains the only book exploring this model, and even then it focuses on the BASIC Ph matrix used to identify coping methods from the development of 6 part stories.

The limitation of the research into the use of 6PSM as a methodology lies in the fact that it has predominantly been focused on the use of the 6PSM in a clinical setting as an assessment tool to gain a better understanding of a client's internal and external worlds (Lahad, 1992, 1993, 2013). There has been some research carried out into the use of this method with groups or individuals outwith the field of Dramatherapy. Dent-Brown (2001a) identified two practitioners; one working with trainee nurses (Hadary, 2013) and with

children suffering from cancer (Shoham in Dent-Brown, 2001a), who have developed the 6PSM with their client groups. In addition, Elmaliach (2013) has written about her use of the 6PSM as a diagnostic tool with new entrepreneurs (Elmaliach, 2013). Both Hadary's and Elmaliach's pieces appear in Lahad et al.'s recent text on this model (2013) alongside a number of other pieces focused on the use of the BASIC Ph matrix developed from the 6PSM, to aid coping strategies in situations of trauma, often caused by global conflicts. As a result, the following literature exploration defines the 6PSM within the context of clinical psychotherapy and Dramatherapy, describing its origins in fairytale and folk lore and its development and adaptations within the field of Dramatherapy.

2.13.2 A DESCRIPTION OF THE 6PSM

The 6PSM, also called 'six-piece story making' (Lahad and Dent-Brown, 2011), is a story creation and telling approach that has its home in the field of Dramatherapy since the early 1990s (for example, Ayalon, 2007, 2013; Dent-Brown & Wang, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Lahad, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2013, 2015; Lahad & Dent-Brown, 2011).It was developed following a period of experimental use (Lahad, 2013) during the early 1990s by Mooli Lahad, a Dramatherapist and psychologist living and working in Israel, alongside his colleague Ofra Ayalon (2007, 2013).Although the 6PSM became a diagnostic tool within Lahad's Integrative Model of Coping and Resiliency during his work as a Dramatherapist with children traumatised by the experience of war, it was initially designed to explore story making as a dramatic and therapeutic tool for use with individuals and groups (Lahad, 1992). Lahad's original investigation into stress and coping mechanisms highlighted that, when faced with trauma, individuals will generally revert to some combination of the following six dimensions (*ibid*):

1. Belief and value systems use – focusing on strategies that involve employing a belief structure eg: religion or political beliefs, also self expression and focusing on wellness within themselves;
2. Emotional or affective strategies that manifest in emotional reactions;
3. Socialisation strategies – talking with others;

4. Strategies that involve imagination such as day dreaming, creating internal fantasies in order to block out or deny the traumatic event(s);
5. Cognitive-behavioural strategies – thinking things through, cognitive 'pondering';
6. Physiological strategies that manifest through exercise – clearly linked to the previous point focusing on wellness.

Lahad collated these dimensions into a multi-modal model called BASIC Ph– the acronym representing the six elements above which are Belief, Affect, Social, Imagination, Cognition and Physiology (Lahad, 1993, 2013, 2015). The multi-modal nature of Lahad's model reflects the reality that individuals will react in more than one way to any given situation. Therefore, they will utilise more than one of the six dimensions but will have a grouping or a choice of modes that they make use of (work within) more frequently (Lahad, 2013).

These mechanisms can be detected through the use of the 6PSM, an approach that involves the client in the creation of a story which is structured through a set of instructions given by the therapist. The creation and telling of the story is then mapped into the BASIC Ph matrix and the language of the client is then understood (Pendzik, 2003, 2008). The story, which would be potentially mythical or fairytale-like in nature (Lahad, 1992, 2013) has six elements to it, and they are:

1. A main character;
2. A task or problem that the character has to cope with;
3. A helpful force – something that will aid the character in their task;
4. A hindering force – something that will cause the character more difficulty;
5. The action of the story – how the character copes with the problem or task;
6. The 'ending' of the story – not necessarily a conclusion but an indication of what happens after the problem has been dealt with.

Once the story has been created, the client is invited to tell the story to the therapist who will then have questions to draw out more information.

Used within the context of clinical ‘treatment’, the structure inherent in the 6PSM provides a fictional, one-step-removed space for clients to explore inner realities with the safety net of talking about and through the characters and situations they have fictionalised (Dent-Brown, 1999, 2001b). Lahad and Dent-Brown discuss this using children’s story creating process as an example. Children often tell stories that hide significant meanings because they are unsure about how the adult will react to the story being told and also because the child has questions that they are afraid to ask directly (Lahad & Dent-Brown, 2011).

The storytelling method itself provides the Dramatherapist with the chance to understand how the self projects itself into and onto the contexts within which the individual operates (Lahad, 1993). From this basis, an assessment can be made of the main ways in which the client chooses to cope with trauma; for example, by physically reacting or by thinking things through and internalising them. This knowledge then allows the therapist to support the client with an appropriate intervention (Lahad, 1992). Lahad, whose use of this methodology enables assessment of those in chronic states of trauma, looks at the lack of belief in self that clients have in these extreme moments. He writes, people in crisis sometimes stop believing or feeling that they can cope with anything, as if they can do nothing for themselves (2011).Releasing the powerlessness or fear of lack of power through story enables the therapist to then view the world from the perspective of the client and thus work with the client on developing appropriate interventions or strategies to enable them to strengthen other modes of coping.

2.13.3 6PSM AND THE SEVEN LEVELS OF ASSESSMENT

The 6PSM has therefore become part of a package of assessment used to help construct a client’s treatment. Lahad refers to this overall tool as a map to enable the therapist to plan out therapeutic treatment (Lahad, 2013; Lahad & Dent-Brown, 2011). The stages of the journey through this map – or the ‘levels’ of treatment – are explored in the following text.

The first level in the map is close to the client’s consciousness and is about their coping styles. This was identified in the BASIC Ph approach that

Lahad developed (1993) and which is described earlier in this chapter. Using BASIC Ph, the therapist would be able to identify the modes of coping that the client uses predominantly.

At the second level, the focus is on the central theme that emerges from the story. Again, this can be close to the client's consciousness as a theme may be very evident in the story. It can also be determined through appropriate questioning linked to what the story seems to be about, what the character's actions would be. Even inviting the client to title the story might indicate a deeper theme emerging (Lahad & Dent-Brown, 2011).

The third level – the 'here and now questions' – relates to the immediate experience the client is sharing with the therapist. Within the story there will be embedded questions that the client is sub or unconsciously asking that the therapist then works to uncover, again connecting with the idea of messages within stories that are hidden (Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990).

Lahad terms the fourth level, the conflict level (Lahad, 2013) as this part of the process lies within the unconscious and therefore the therapist has to be aware of over-interpreting or misinterpreting the stories being told. Lahad (*ibid*) terms this the 'power-game' of interpretation; the idea that the therapist is the expert and knows more than the client whose story is being told. To counter this difficulty the therapist instead adopts a psychoanalytic approach to the client's story, looking for verbs and adverbs that define the action within the story and countering each with the opposite. This enables the therapist to see the inner conflict that the client is potentially struggling with.

The fifth level –developmental – tracks the developmental stage that the story is emerging from. Adapting Erikson's (1964) stages of development, Lahad identifies the challenges that individuals face from infancy through to adulthood (2013). The Dramatherapist considers where in the client's development the story 'sits' which enables them to respond appropriately.

The penultimate level is the sixth level; the quest of the hero. This level evokes Jungian archetype and symbolism as it focuses on the character in 6PSM as hero (Jung, 1970; Jung & Franz, 1964). The hero archetype can

represent as anima or animus, which is the unconscious inner self (Lahad, 2013).

The final level is that of symbols and the analysis of those that emerge from the story. There is a clear distinction between symbol and sign from a Jungian perspective (Jung, 1970); the former indicating something that is not known and therefore cannot be precisely determined, the latter being a representation of something known.

The mapping framework offered by Lahad can be used by those working with the 6PSM to understand how they can move through different levels of consciousness to enable the client to gain a deeper understanding of both challenges and solutions to the issues raised in their stories. The framework can also be used with other Dramatherapy assessment techniques and in recent years a number of practitioners have made connections with this method. One of the most well known is Dramatherapy theorist and practitioner, Robert Landy.

2.13.4 ROBERT LANDY'S ROLE TAXONOMY, ROLE THEORY AND THE TELL-A-STORY (TAS) MODEL

Landy has written extensively on the development of role and role theory (for example, Landy, 1991, 1993, 2001, 2003, 2009, 2011). Landy's concept of role in Dramatherapy relates to a separation out of discrete personae, either consciously or unconsciously (1993). Separate from character, roles can be classified and Landy's Taxonomy of Roles provides a vast range of possible 'selves', all of which are real and can be played (2012). Roles are core constructs within an individual which make up the personality of that individual as opposed to characters which are the physical manifestations of role (Pendzik, 2011; Snow & D'Amico, 2011), manifestations of a role which acts as a container for the character to take on.

Unlike other role assessments used in Dramatherapy, Landy's Role Theory focuses on the ability of individuals to think of themselves in particular roles, not their ability to act out those roles. In order to be able to identify, classify and then explore role, Landy developed a taxonomy of roles, which connects the function of roles with six particular domains. These domains

correlate almost exactly with Lahad's BASIC Ph categories (Landy, 1997, 2003; Pendzik, 2003) (See Table 2.4 below).

Table 2.4: Role Taxonomy Comparison

Role Taxonomy (Landy, 1997)	**6PSM (Lahad, 1993)**
Spiritual	Belief
Affective	Affective
Social	Social
Aesthetic	Imaginative
Cognitive	Cognitive
Somatic	Physical

The assessment method Landy created as a result of the role method focuses on seven aspects of role function:

1. The client's ability to invoke and name roles;
2. The number of roles a client has;
3. The client's ability to attribute qualities to roles;
4. The client's ability to delineate alternative qualities or sub-roles;
5. Their ability to perceive the function of a role as role;
6. The style and aesthetic distance present in role playing;
7. Their ability to relate the fictional role to everyday life (Pendzik, 2003).

Significantly, internal roles are implicitly evident as individuals attempt to find a way to balance competing needs. Understanding these different roles, and the behaviour changes that working within each role creates, enables the therapist to find a way of supporting the client to move flexibly between them (Landy, 1991, 2009).

Connected with this assessment methodology was Landy's development of TAS – the Tell-A-Story assessment method –which he later separated from the Role Profile work he was doing in order to create a less cumbersome assessment technique. Unlike the profile and checklist Landy developed, TAS moves the client to create something in response (Landy, 2003). The structure of TAS is very loose allowing for a range of responses from the client; the script given to the participants essentially requiring that they tell a story that can be real or made up and that must involve at least one character (Landy, 2003).

Once the story is created, the client can tell it verbally or physically through the use of themselves and/or objects acting as props; for example, puppets. The therapist can then ask questions to generate more information about the story and in particular, the characters; their qualities, attributes, functions, ways of being as well as their connections to each other and also to everyday life. As with Gersie's (1997, 2003a) and Lahad's (1992, 1993) storytelling assessment processes, TAS enables an aesthetic distance to be applied to the creation and exploration of stories, offering a safe perspective.

As with the 6PSM, once the story has been created, the therapist is then in a position to consider the roles that have been explored in the story and through this, the manner in which the client embodies those roles.

2.14 6PSM, EMBODIED REFLEXIVE PRACTICE AND THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Throughout this section on the development of the 6PSM, and linking this with the previous sections on former and current story-as-assessment models, the concept of role as a pivotal function of an individual's ability to engage with story has been highlighted (Jones, 2007; Gersie, 1997, 2003a; Landy, 2009, 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2011; Snow & D'Amico, 2011). To understand oneself in relation to the roles one is able to see oneself playing is key to true reflexive processing and thus transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991). There is a clear synergy between the 6PSM structured model and the process of engaging with critically reflective writing (Cunliffe, 2004; Fels, 2012, 2015; Stuart, 2001). Unpacking a story created through

the 6PSM approach and linking this to role theory and archetypal role structures (Franz, 1996; Jung & Franz, 1964; Landy, 2011; Pendzik, 2003, 2008) offers the opportunity to create an embodied reflexive process for individuals and groups to explore their realities through fictionalised and mythical storyworlds (Bettleheim, 1976; Franz, 1996; Linds & Vettraino, 2008; Vettraino, 2015).

The research question which was defined in Chapter 1 emerged from a number of themes arising from the literature. These themes centre around the development of story as an approach to reflexive practice, embodiment and the connection between reflexivity and physical action or inaction. In addition, themes connected to the structuring or non-structuring of a story process to enable embodied reflexivity for practitioners and the need for safety in the purpose and place of aesthetic distance were also highlighted. The research question, defined again below, offers scope for further investigation:

> *In what ways can the 6PSM be used within the broad context of education, to explore, interpret and enhance practitioners embodied meaning making processes in order to effect change in their professional practice?*

CHAPTER 3 –
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

For the purposes of this research I have chosen to position myself within a relativist paradigm, ontologically and epistemologically drawing my knowledge and way of knowing from social construct(ionism/ivism) and interpretivism. I believe that knowledge is created with and by social interaction; it is not discovered but rather generated through our connection with others. Constructionism, as defined by Ackerman (n.d) and McNamee (2004) focuses on knowledge created through external interaction with those around us; it could potentially and simplistically be characterised as learning 'during and with' rather than 'after and from'. Constructivism, on the other hand, is about constructing learning individually and internally; an internal cognitive process of knowledge formation. Using the same simplistic characterisation, this would be learning 'after and from'. Some academics link interpretivism with constructivism (Creswell, 2007; Robson, 2002). An interpretivist perspective puts emphasis on the importance of the participants' views of their actions and understanding, recognising that they are experts about and of themselves.

The constructivist/ionist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology. In other words, relativists' way of knowing is constructed through understanding that all things are connected and individuals create experiences through their relation to and with others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Relativist research locates the focus for the study in the belief that knowledge does not exist 'out there', external to the individual. Rather, knowledge exists through the interpretations and meanings that people attach to experiences, objects and so on (Robson, 2002). Realism, however, is situated within a positivist or postpositivist paradigm and relies on experimental and rigorously defined quantitative research methods (Creswell, 2007). Whilst there are realism based qualitative studies, often in practice based professions, realism presents a difficulty to researchers aiming to develop constructed knowledge,

drawn from the connections made between and with participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Robson, 2002).

The methodology chosen to engage in this research process is bricolage, which is explored in detail in section 3.4 Methodological Framework. At this point it is useful to summarise the method and process of the research design, this is indicated in the following sub section.

3.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was a longitudinal study carried out in two stages over the period of two years. There were four participants, all of whom were experienced educational professionals working in different education contexts. The 6PSM as the intervention was explored during Stage 1 of the research which involved participants meeting together with me as researcher/facilitator approximately once per month over the period of nine months to engage in 1.5 to 2 hour long practical and interactive sessions where their own 6PSMs were explored and developed through dialogue and the use of applied theatre techniques. An explanation of the content of each of these sessions can be found in Table 3.1 on pp.94-99.

Data collection methods are explored in section 3.7, however for it is useful to touch on what the approaches were here as aide memoir moving forward. Each of the interactive sessions in Stage 1, including the non-structured group interviews that followed the practical work, were videoed for analysis. In addition, following each session, I carried out a non-structured individual interview with the participant (or participants) whose story was explored during the previous session. This was captured through an audio recording.

Stage 2 involved an evaluative and reflective non-structured group interview which was carried out a year after Stage 1 had finished. Three of the four participants attended for Stage 2. This evaluative group process was captured through audio recording.

Data analysis was done as an on-going process throughout Stage 1. As each session occurred, the video footage was manually transcribed. After

the third session, the data were reviewed looking for the emergence of thematic ideas which were manually highlighted in the transcribed notes. The individual non-structured interviews were independently transcribed and the data from these were extracted into NVIVO where the process of codifying was carried out. The themes emerging from the non-structured interviews was manually mapped to the themes emerging from the videoed sessions and as the study continued, these themes began to be crystallized, reducing in number. The data from Stage 2 were also independently transcribed and combined with the data from Stage 1. The process of crystallizing thematic development was then reviewed with the new data and again, the themes were reduced in number, finally emerging into five main thematic frames. These are discussed in Chapter 4: Results and Discussion.

3.3 SAMPLING

3.3.1 JUSTIFICATION OF SAMPLE SELECTION

The sample selected to engage in the research process for this study was kept at ten with a desire to recruit between four and eight to the study. There was an even split of male and female as well as a range of ages from thirty five years old to fifty three years old. Convenient, or purposive (Sarantakos, 2005) sampling was employed initially as five individuals were people known to me (Creswell, 2007; Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). The other five were individuals who had been referred through existing contacts but who were not known to me.

There were a number of reasons for keeping the sample selection small to do with practicality and the purposive nature of the study (Levi-Strauss, 1966; Sarantakos, 2005). As the focus of the study was on gaining a rich and deep understanding of reflexive processes within individuals in relation to their own professional practice, keeping the number of participants small encouraged depth rather than breadth of data (Creswell, 2007). Smaller numbers of participants also made data collection, analysis and review more manageable for an in depth study (Creswell, 2007; Miles et al., 2014). The nature of the data collection process was also an interactive and creative one, encouraging participants to invest honestly and holistically in the

reflexive process using storytelling and Image Theatre techniques (see Appendix R for information on the latter). Already identified in Chapter 2, there can be a degree of anxiety that comes with the kind of honest and critical reflection (Cunliffe, 2002; 2004; Stuart, 2001) which the participants were encouraged to engage in. Interacting with creative methodologies in a group setting requires trust in, amongst other things, the fellow participants in order to provide worthwhile and sustained engagement (Gersie & King, 1997; Pässilä et al., 2015). As the addition of creative methods of working was added into a potentially anxiety laden, reflexive situation, it was felt that a smaller group enabled the process of trust building-and-maintaining to be more easily managed by both the participants and by myself in the role of group facilitator.

The study was also broken down into two stages; Stage 1 was longitudinal with eight sessions planned over approximately a year long period (see Figure 3.1, p.83). This stage consisted of the interactive developmental sessions during which the participants engaged with the 6PSM process, focusing on the research question concerned with exploration, interpretation and enhancement of their practice. Because of this, geographical limitations were also placed on the sample selection to ensure that participants were located in or close to the venue in which the research sessions occurred thereby making sustained engagement in the process more likely to succeed.

Stage 2 was an evaluative, follow up meeting a year after the cessation of the 6PSM process sessions, to gauge any continued or lasting impact of the research work on practice. Because of the duration of the study required, it was felt that a smaller group were more likely to remain focused and invested in the process and therefore to stay together.

3.3.2 FINAL SAMPLE

I contacted the ten possible participants through a range of means; by e-mail, phone and in person. Out of the ten possible participants contacted, six responded positively to engage in the research. Five of the six were known to me; four female, two male. I met with each respondent individually to explain the nature and purpose of the research and to also go through ethical

and moral guidelines with them, including ensuring that they had signed the participant letter (see Appendix L). All six participants engaged in the first session held on 25th October 2011, and in the introductory session which was held approximately two weeks prior to this. Prior to the second session held on 22nd November 2011 two participants withdrew from the research process due to a change in personal circumstances. This left a group of four participants, three females and one male, who stayed throughout the Stage 1 sessions. At this point, I considered attempting to recruit more participants to the study. However, as has already been mentioned, the need to develop trust and allow for vulnerability to emerge and be supported led me to believe that increasing the participant base once the introductory sessions had begun would cause unnecessary anxiety for the remaining participants. We did discuss this as a group at the beginning of the second session (22/11/11) and the participants' response was that they were keen to keep with the group as it was.

Prior to the second stage of the data collection process – the evaluative follow up meeting which took place a year after the cessation of the first stage – one of the participants had experienced a change in personal and professional circumstances and was not contactable. She was therefore not able to attend the second stage of the data collection process. (See Appendix F for sample information).

3.3.3 ACKNOWLEDGING BIAS – SAMPLE CONSIDERATIONS

All of the participants were known to me professionally. I was clear to ensure that any personal or professional knowledge I had of them outside of the research context did not influence my data analysis or conclusions drawn from the data. My interpretations of significant data arising from the study was verified by the participants during Stage 1, in the interactive sessions as well as the post-session interviews carried out with participants. Three of the four participants also engaged in their own analysis of experiences confirming my interpretations during the Stage 2 evaluative follow up meeting.

Figure 3.1: Timeline of Data Collection Events

2011	OCT	25/10/2011	– Introductory session
	NOV	22/11/2011	– Session 2
		29/11/2011	– Session 3
	DEC	20/12/2011	– Session 4 – P:A and P:C story
2012	JAN	10/01/2012	– P:A Post story telling reflection interview
		20/01/2012	– P:C Post story reflection interview
		31/01/2012	– Session 5 – P:D story
	FEB	14/02/2012	– Session 6 – P:B story
	MAR	13/03/2012	– Session 7 – P:C and P:D anonymous stories
		17/03/2012	– P:D Post story reflection interview
	APR	10/04/2012	– Session 8 – P:A anonymous story
		11/04/2012	– P:B Post story reflection interview
		18/04/2012	– P:A Post anonymous story reflection interview
May 2012 to Mar 2013			
2013	APR	09/04/2013	– Longer term evaluation interview with P:B, P:C & P:D

3.4 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Whilst it would be erroneous to assume that all qualitative researchers come from the same ontological and epistemological perspective, a general comment that could be made about qualitative research is that it tends to focus on socially constructed realities, and qualitative researchers are interested in the qualities of objects, experiences, events, and so on (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Sarantakos, 2005). Approaching this research, then, from a social construct(ionist/ivist) and interpretivist paradigm, as has already been

indicated earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 1, locates my bias within qualitative research and within the social sciences (Creswell, 2007; Denzin, 1989; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Robson (2002) and Sarantakos (2005) discuss two possible ways of developing qualitative research design; fixed and flexible. Fixed design tends to be used in situations where the researcher is clear about the methodological framework they wish to apply and the process is structured and pre-determined prior to the study taking place (Sarantakos, 2005). The challenge posed by a fixed design lies in the lack of possibilities for adaptability based on data collection during the process. Flexible qualitative research design allows for a more open and adaptable approach to the study, whilst still requiring rigorous attention to planning for research (Sarantakos, 2005). With flexible designs, there is an acknowledgement that the data collected were influenced in an ongoing way by the range of interactions participants and researcher have with each other and the context within which the research is operating (Robson, 2002; Sarantakos, 2005). Because of this hermeneutic interaction between data and participant/researcher, a flexible qualitative design was more appropriate for this piece of research.

3.4.1 METHODOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES

Seeking to understand the perspectives of others and how their experiences shape and influence their engagement with the world around them was a key element of this study. However, the variety of data that could be collected, along with the theoretical lenses used to understand the data, led to a number of different possible methodological approaches being considered (Creswell, 2007).

The 6PSM was itself a potential tool for data collection; the original purpose of the method development was to act as a tool for enabling dramatherapists to gain a better understanding of how clients coped with trauma and was therefore a diagnostic tool (for example, Dent-Brown, 1991; Lahad, 1992). The 6PSM is also a story creation/telling process in which participants generated a number of mythical or fictional stories that

connected with their own professional lives. As this story creation/telling process formed the main basis for the research, I considered narrative inquiry as the methodological framework for my research. As Chase (2005) indicates, narratives are socially constructed pieces of verbal or written text that are developed and also constrained by the social contexts within which the pieces are created and performed. The sharing and commenting on these stories created loops of feedback for participants that then informed and further developed their storying process (Clandinin, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

In the research process, the participants also engaged in interactive sessions in which they had individual and collective experiences. In these experiences, individuals experienced a different response to the group and yet from the same phenomenon. Wanting to capture their experiences could be considered from both a phenomenological perspective and potentially as action research (Robson, 2002).

As both researcher and facilitator of the interactive sessions with the group, there was the potential for co-participation occurring that required me to consider my own place within the body of data. There were a number of ways of capturing these experiences and my reaction to them, potentially through a number of written methods leading me to also consider writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005).

However, none of these separate methodological approaches fulfilled the entirety of the research focus and a new approach was therefore required to enable the gaps in the methodology to be bridged. Emerging from the consideration I had given to other methodological frameworks, my focus turned to the work initially of Levi-Strauss (1962/1966), Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and then to Kincheloe (2001, 2005) and the concept of bricolage as a research paradigm.

3.4.2 DEVELOPING THE BRICOLAGE

In attempting to define bricolage, Levi-Strauss (1962/1966) began by considering the bricoleur. From the French term meaning ‘handy man’ or ‘jack of all trades’, the researcher-as-bricoleur is an individual who draws

upon a range of tools and methods in order to create new knowledge. This new knowledge is woven together from a range of disciplines, taking into account multiple perspectives and creatively revisioning the ways in which existing methods and tools can be used. Much like a patchwork quilt; a much used metaphor when describing bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Kincheloe, 2001, 2005; Selking, 2014), the resulting outcome(s) is knowledge created through the process of the bricolage.

Levi-Strauss' (1962/1966) initial foray into the concept of bricolage and the bricoleur emphasised the researcher-as-bricoleur being able to create new ways of thinking and working with existing tools, ideas and methods within the restrictions of existing disciplines. He stated that the role of the bricoleur was to 'make do with' what was already to hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Levi-Strauss, *ibid*). Somewhat controversially, Kincheloe's (2001) approach to bricolage moved the concept of the bricoleur from being an individual restricted to use the tools around him/her, to being the creator of new and unimagined ways of thinking and being, unrestricted by what Levi-Strauss (*ibid*) had termed a closed universe of possibilities. In Kincheloe's reconceptualising of the bricoleur (2001, 2005) and Kincheloe and Berry (2004), the character of the bricoleur becomes an adventurer, pushing at the boundaries of interdisciplinarity and taking to extreme the concept of emergent, socially constructed knowledge (Lincoln, 2001).

According to Kincheloe (2005), a contemporary understanding of bricolage focuses on the application of emergent methodological strategies as direction or focus changes in the course of research design and practice. These emergent strategies result from a dialectical and hermeneutic relationship with the ontological and epistemological stances of the researcher-as-bricoleur. The bricoleur connects their own multiple perspectives with the objects of study, with their sources of information, and the cultural, social and political contexts within which the research is occurring (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).This is much like Loy's (1993) conceptualising of Indra's Web (see Appendix G) with the experiences of knowledge and knowing acting as the jewels in the net, constantly reflecting and refracting creating opportunities for relational learning (Linds & Vettraino, 2015).

Negotiating the dimensions of bricolage exposes the researcher-as-bricoleur to the concepts of, among others, narrative bricolage – the understanding that knowledge is shaped by the stories around us, in us, with us. Bricolage is therefore not concerned with the development of monological knowledge but rather with multi-dimensional knowledge and ways of knowing. Another dimension of bricolage is methodological bricolage – the possibilities of multi-disciplinary approaches to data gathering; and interpretive bricolage–a range of interpretive strategies constructed hermeneutically through a process of visiting and revisiting knowledge and knowing (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe, 2005). Bricolage is therefore an iterative process; defined by some as research-in-praxis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln, 2001), this methodological framework evolves through an emergent, reflexive and dynamic research approach.

3.4.3 THE EMERGENCE OF A BRICOLEUR

When I first conceptualised this study, I understood that it needed to be open to reflexive possibilities within the methodological framework as well as the methods and tools for data gathering (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Kincheloe, 2001, 2005; Levi-Strauss, 1962/1966). Also fundamental to the area of study – the 6PSM as an embodied and reflexive tool for professional development – was my understanding that the process of knowledge creation within the study itself would be relational. In other words, I understand that I have an impact on, and am impacted by the world around me; not just that I am present with the world but that I acknowledge the intersubjectivity of my connection with the world (Finlay, 2014). As a researcher I therefore acknowledged my position in relation to the participants in my study and took cognisance of the constant feedback loop of learning that I/they/we experienced through the connections we made (Finlay, 2014; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Selking, 2014).

Evolving from this understanding of myself and positionality, I explored the possibility of engaging with this research as a very embryonic, emergent bricoleur. In the process of doing so, I acknowledged the limitations of my own knowledge and understanding of the practice of bricolage, reflecting on

Denzin's (1994), Duymedijan & Ruling's (2010), and Kincheloe's (2001) assertions that becoming a bricoleur is a developmental, life-long process unlikely to be satiated in the duration of a doctoral study. As will be discussed in the conclusions to this thesis, the journey to understanding bricolage and the researcher-as-bricoleur is still very much a work in progress.

The rationale for engaging as a bricoleur was therefore linked to the opportunities and possibilities for a multi-lensed view of the 6PSM. This kaleidoscope of perspectives emerged organically and reflexively through the use of a range of tools and methods drawn from narrative methodology and storytelling, aesthetic and dramatic processes, and visual arts. The design of the study itself also followed this emergent process. For example Stage 1 comprised originally of ten sessions exploring 6PSM, this became eight when participants in the study either left or felt that their work with the process had reached a natural ending. The timing of the follow up evaluation session (Stage 2) a year after the 6PSM sessions had ceased emerged during the process of the eight practical sessions enabling a longitudinal approach to be taken to the data collection. The sessions themselves became almost wholly emergent based on the participants' needs during the process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and this iterative and reflexive model enabled a range of different tools to be utilized by the participants and me in the exploration of the central research question (see Table 3.1for session content).

In the role of bricoleur, I also wanted to be able to identify the dilemma that would exist for me in the balancing of my roles within the study. As researcher, the central thread of the research question ran through all of the experiences that I created, entered or observed. However, I also had the role of facilitator for the practical, 6PSM sessions through which my research question was explored. Tied into that was my occasional engagement as co-participant in the sessions. Viewed from these three different lenses, engaging as bricoleur permitted me to work across the boundaries of these roles (Kincheloe, 2001, 2005; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Selking, 2014), acknowledging the 'messiness' of the connections and exploring the complexity.

Denzin & Lincoln (2005) emphasise the use of the aesthetic in the creation of new knowledge, linking this to the act of crafting tools for the research process. As a bricoleur, I also wanted to be able to draw on my experiences of dramatic and theatrical processes to generate a collage of learning that would invite all of us involved in the research to interpret experiences and events occurring during the research in a range of ways (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). The reason for this was to enable ideas to build on from previous learning; much like a sculptor working clay in layers, one adding depth onto another (Selking, 2014). This layering of knowledge also enabled a process of crystallization (Robson, 2002) to occur in which evolving knowledge was reflected and refracted in order to create a more in-depth understanding of the 6PSM process and the participants' engagement with it (Selking, 2014).

Employing the metaphor of crystallization, again reconnecting with the refraction of jewels of learning (Loy, 1993) I endeavour to explain the way in which the actors within the research process (participants, researcher, space and so on) impacted on – reflexed with – each other to create multiple new knowledge processes. Drawing from the literature on reflexivity, I offer the term 'reflexed' to explain the way in which in the moment actions were taken based on immediate thought processes occurring as the interactions evolved. This is not to say that triangulation is not part of the analytical process in bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) but rather that crystallization offers an image of numerous prisms or lenses through which data can be viewed (Selking, 2014).

3.4.4 NOTES OF CAUTION

The criticisms levelled at bricolage have centred predominantly in the area of plurality in that the bricoleur draws from other disciplines in order to generate new ways of knowing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Bricolage actively rejects the concept of monological knowledge creation and asserts the need for creating multi and interdisciplinary methods and tools for learning. This in turn has led to concerns about the researcher-as-bricoleur facing a lack of focus for their research (Selking, 2014, and Warne & McAndrew, 2009, raise these issues as generic concerns relating to the use of bricolage).

To address this concern, attention needs to be given to the ontological and epistemological perspectives within which research is undertaken. In the case of this research, I have clearly stated my stance as being within the social science paradigm. As a social constructionist I believe that our knowledge about ourselves and the world around us is built through relational and dialectical connections with others. Situating myself and my research within the interpretivist perspective, I connect interpretivism with constructivism and therefore this research is considered through the lens of connective understanding and co-constructed knowledge. And indeed I am an emerging bricoleur, cognisant of the interactive and complex process of iterative learning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and the loops of feedback created by data, fed through an interpretivist lens connecting the parts of the study with the whole.

The centrality of the research question created a thread that ran through the process of the bricolage (Kincheloe, 2005; Warne and McAndrew, 2009) drawing together the components of the study to create a holistic piece. Viewed through one lens would negate the relational understanding that learning is generated through connection with others. Keeping connected with the research question enabled researcher-as-bricoleur to maintain what Berry (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004) terms the POET (Point Of Entry Text); the jumping off point to which the bricoleur returns as new knowledge emerges.

Another area of consideration was the complexity of my relationship with the research. As already identified, I potentially played three roles; researcher, facilitator and co-participant. Each of these roles had a separate focus, and there was potential for them to converge at points in the process. The relational nature of bricolage is a fundamental benefit of this methodology in this context and therefore considering this as a note of caution requires clarity about where difficulties might lie. Warne and McAndrew (2009) acknowledge that it is not possible to separate out the multiple epistemological positions from which bricolage might be built. Indeed it is necessary, in their view, to have the researcher's/practitioner's/facilitator's voice as part of the process (Warne & McAndrew, 2008, 2009). In order to address this, I built opportunities for self-

reflexive/reflective experiences throughout the research process. These experiences built in and on the practical sessions, in dialogue with participants, through critically reflective monologues before and after the practical sessions, and through conversations with others peripheral to the research study but part of the journey, for example supervisory colleagues and other doctoral students. These experiences were captured in a variety of ways and refracted back into the research process. In this way, there were possibilities for polyphonous narratives (Bakhtin, 1968/1984; Boje, 2001, 2006; Morson, 1986) to emerge creating depth and complexity to the study and enabling my voice to be acknowledged as part of the process.

Denzin (2014), Lincoln and Denzin (2005), Kincheloe and Berry (2004) and Warne and McAndrew (2009) all raise a note of caution concerning a return to, what they view as the reductionist and limiting methodologies of positivist and structuralist perspectives. For the bricoleur, there might be a desire to slip back into a positivist agenda, speaking of certainties and pronouncing outcomes as absolutes (Kincheloe, 2005). Indeed, I would suggest that for my emerging bricoleur self, I was aware that I might be temporarily lured by the sirens of certainty and apparent 'safety' offered by positivist approaches in order to prove rather than discover. My historical epistemological experience of research suggests that although qualitative in nature, my way of knowing has somehow also always been connected with proof and fact. Positioning myself within bricolage has taken me to the place of not knowing, in which my assumptions were tested and new knowledge created (Rogers, 2012b); a place of challenge and anxiety as well as one of wonder and discovery (Warne & McAndrew, 2009).

In order to address this note of caution, I return again to the emergent nature of the methodological development mentioned earlier in this section (see Section 3.4). The design of the study flexed with the participants' needs and capacities, while mindful of the POET; the research question. A symbiotic, hermeneutic interpretation of the lived experiences enabled the building of rich and deep data focused on understanding the complexity of the experiences rather than on developing certainty (Rogers, 2012b).

3.5 THE 6PSM IN PRACTICE: SOME NOTES ON THE SESSION CONTENT

In the original 6PSM model, clients are invited to create their story by drawing the component parts on a sheet of paper, separated into six areas, one for each of the six parts of the story technique (Lahad, 1993). For this study, an adaptation to the original technique was made in the form of the inclusion of picture cards which the participants used instead of drawn images to shape their story (see Appendix H for the set of picture cards used). There were a number of reasons for this adaptation. In the mid 1990s I attended a workshop run by Dr Kim Dent-Brown who was completing his PhD in the 6PSM approach. In this workshop, Dr Dent-Brown explored the 6PSM model through the use of a set of picture cards similar to those in Appendix H.

Having previously explored the 6PSM as originally designed, I was intrigued by the experience of the process using picture cards. I identified a significant difference between the two approaches which related to the sense of freedom from judgement in relation to the use of picture cards. Kowalchuk and Stone (2000), Miraglia (2008) and McKean (2000) all highlight the challenges that adults feel in relation to art related activities. In particular, Miraglia's (2008) study was into the attitude of pre-service teachers to art in which she found that there were a range of manifestations of art anxiety, one of the main ones being drawing. Having previously taught drawing as part of my role delivering arts education to training teachers, I have observed several students who experienced anxiety about their drawing capability. Although I am a confident drawer, the use of picture cards offered me the chance to focus my attention on the story I wanted to create, rather than being concerned about my attempts to create a likeness of the pictures in my head.

Another significant difference for me lay in the story that the pictures generated. Rather than being able to choose images that might represent the story I believed I wanted to tell, the cards were given to me unsighted with the instruction to use them in the order they were given ie: first card is the character of the story. What this led to was the creation of another story

that I found very useful to reflect on and one that enabled me to see ways forward in relation to the original story I planned to tell. I was left with the feeling that I had told the story I needed to tell rather than the one I wanted to tell. This led me to be curious about what the impact of the picture cards would be on the participants in relation to the stories they might have wanted to tell rather than the ones they wound up telling.

Because of both of the experiences above, I decided to adapt the process to use picture cards, thus attempting to reduce or eliminate any anxiety for the participants and enabling them to explore stories prompted by the images rather than predetermined stories. During the sessions, participants therefore obtained unsighted six picture cards, either by being given them by me as facilitator or by choosing them from the pack of cards.

Table 3.1: Stage 1 – Session Content

NOTE: all abbreviations are explained in the key below the table

Session/Event – number and date	Activity	Participants present	6PSM	Image Theatre	Other technique(s)/ Concepts used
11/11/2011 Introductory session (30 minutes)	• First session to introduce the participants to each other. • Confirmation/clarification of meeting dates/times/venue • Clarification of research purpose and process – including reiteration of information in agreement letter • Q&A • Session was not videoed	P:A, P:B, P:C, P:D (+2*)	N/a	N/a	N/a
25/11/2011 Session 1 (1 hour)	• Contracting – a 'check in', in a circle, how is everyone, thoughts for today • Drama games – trust building, getting to know you, leadership connection • Handshake sculpt – positioning, different viewpoints • 'check out' – quick 'take aways' from today	P:A, P:C, P:D (+2)			Drama games, embodied reflexivity
22/11/2011 Session 2 (1.5 hours)	• Contracting – a 'check in', in a circle, how is everyone, thoughts from Session 1, thoughts for today • Breathing exercises – breathing in the circle, noticing deep breathing, walking breath, breathing pairs (to get comfortable with noise making) • Drama games – trust building continuation for P:B • Group sculpting – build an image to explore an emotion, step by step, non-verbal	P:A, P:B, P:C, P:D		X	Drama games and conventions, embodied reflexivity

	initially, then adding sound and movement to bring the sculpture to life • Creating story from the sculpture – using still image, beginning the link to story and storytelling • Unstructured group interview – reflection beginning with how would you describe your experience of tonight? • Explanation of 6PSM and any questions				
29/11/2011 Session 3 (1.5 hours)	• Contracting – as above, thoughts from Session 2, thoughts for today • Drama games – team game playing (cross the floor as a team), 'stop n go' to build story • Introduction of 6PSM and the image cards used to represent each element of the structure, and the research process of commentary and observation after the story is told using an external practitioner's (J's) story created using the method. Facilitator told J's story, participants listened. At the end, commentary and observations were invited leading to in-depth discussion about each card with key themes emerging • Participants took on characters and objects within the story and played back the story to embody the experience. • Unstructured group interview – reflection beginning with general thoughts, how you have experienced 6PSM tonight, physicalisation of the process, link to their practice (leadership emerging), questions about creating their own 6PSM, 6 image cards are dealt to each participant, instructions given to keep each card in order eg: first card they were given is the character card, second card is the task and so on. Cards can't be swapped or moved.	P:A, P:B, P:C, P:D	X		Role play and dramatisation, embodied reflexivity

20/12/2011 Session 4 (1.5 hours)	• Contracting – as above, thoughts from Session 3, thoughts for today, changing process due to participant absence – focus on stories rather than dramatisation • Straight into story sharing process – P:C shared story in detail. Facilitator opened up the process to questions and observations. Prolonged unstructured discussion and dialogue**. P:A then shared story in detail. Facilitator opened up the process to questions and observations. Prolonged unstructured discussion and dialogue. • Unstructured group interview – reflection as in previous sessions. Cards are taken back in and new cards issued. Same process as in previous session.	P:A, P:C, P:D	X		Dialogue, embodied reflexivity
31/01/2012 Session 5 (1.5 hours)	• Contracting – as above, thoughts from Session 4, thoughts for today, changing process due to participant absence – choices about stories to tell as each participant had a story and the facilitator offered a story to add in another possibility • Straight into story sharing process – P:D shared story in detail. Facilitator opened up the process to questions and observations. Prolonged unstructured discussion and dialogue**. Participants requested the facilitator's story which was shared in detail. Facilitator opened up the process to questions and observations. Prolonged unstructured discussion and dialogue. • Unstructured group interview – reflection as in previous sessions, connecting previous sessions together through insights discussed. Cards are taken back in and new cards issued. Same process as in previous session.	P:A, P:C, P:D	X		Dialogue, embodied reflexivity
14/02/12 Session 6	• Contracting – as above, thoughts from Session 5, thoughts for today, changing process due to participant absence, no warm up, into stories and then into action	P:B, P:C, P:D	X		Dramatisation, characterisation

(1.5 hours)	• Straight into story sharing process – P:C and P:D retold stories to brief P:B. Then P:B shared story in detail. Facilitator opened up the process to questions and observations. Prolonged unstructured discussion and dialogue**. • Options for the group to decide what to do next, more story sharing? Exploration of existing stories? What does the group need? P:D requested to explore her story through characterisation and dramatisation techniques – wanted to focus on how it felt for the character to challenge the hindering force and for the character to remain unchanged. • P:B, P:C and facilitator took on characters in the story – facilitator participating and facilitating process. Unstructured reflections after each element from P:D as observer. • Unstructured group interview – reflection as in previous sessions, connecting previous sessions together through insights discussed. Cards are taken back in and new cards issued. Same process as in previous session.				Dialogue**
13/03/2012 Session 7 (1.5 hours)	Change to planned session due to opportunity for a guest facilitator – visiting professor from Canada WL. Participants asked in advance and agreed. Researcher/facilitator becomes participant in the process • Contracting – as above, thoughts from Session 6, thoughts for today, acknowledgement of participant absence, introduction to visiting professor • Change in the process – anonymous story telling. Researcher/facilitator reads a story from each participant that hadn't been shared with the group already along with a story from the visiting professor and a story from herself. As the stories are read by the facilitator, no one is aware of whose story is whose apart from the creators.	P:A, P:C, P:D	X	X	Dialogue, characterisation, embodied reflexivity

	• Having told the stories, WL gave out the stories to each participant to work on, ensuring that no participant got their own story. Task is to tell the story in 5 critical moments as images, without words. • Image Theatre processes to unpack the story, creating titles for each story image, creating the next image along and giving those titles. • End the process with each participant creating their own haiku of the story they were telling. Read it aloud. Story creator to listen carefully and note what is useful. • Unstructured group interview – reflection as in previous sessions, connecting previous sessions together through insights discussed. Discussion about 6PSM process itself and the use of the cards. Participants felt there was a missing element – a card to symbolise internal struggle or force. Cards are taken back in and new cards issued with an additional card taking fifth place, moving action to sixth and ending/conclusion to seventh. Same process as in previous session.				
10/04/2012 Session 8 (1.5 hours)	• Contracting – as above, thoughts from Session 7 picking up on the different facilitation, thoughts for today • Anonymous storytelling – facilitator reads a story to the group anonymously (P:A's story). Facilitator opened up the process to questions and observations. Prolonged unstructured discussion and dialogue. From this emerged a focus on a character in the story 'the beast'. • Image Theatre process to unpack the beast, each participant is given the chance to create an image to depict the beast and their position in relation to the rest of the elements of the story. Participants asked to step out of the image and give thoughts about the image.	P:A, P:B, P:C, P:D	X	X	Dialogue, dramatisation, characterisation, thought tapping, embodied reflexivity

	• Emergent from this is most important element of the story for the participants. Use of Image Theatre again to show this element through group image, each participant creating their own version of the most important element, each person stepping out of the images created and giving the image a word. • Facilitator then asks the participants to go back into the position that they felt most strongly out of all the images. From this a group image of the story was created. Each person internally monologing for their character and then externally monologing. Reflexively exploring the experience and choosing one line/phrase out of their monologues to take into another context. • Create these characters but in a real world context eg: a coffee shop. Abstraction of Image Theatre brought to life in dramatisation of a real world situation where characters based on the original story interact. Process is unpacked, embodied and reflexive dialogue. • Participants want to change the outcome by considering the behaviours within the dramatisation. Changing the mindset from negative to positive. They do this by revisiting the internal monologues and choosing other 'mantras' that refocus their actions positively. • Dramatise the scene again with the new mantra, beginning with an external monologue and ending with a thought tapping process. • Unstructured group interview – reflection as in previous sessions, prolonged and detailed dialogue about insights, 'aha!' moments, taking forward into practice. Additional card mentioned at the end.				

Notes

*(+2)indicates the two participants who left the group before Session 2 due to personal circumstances changing.

**dialogue in this context refers to a process akin to Isaac's (1999) Dialogue Diamond. This is a divergent/convergent model where participants diverge their thought process through *suspending* (their own beliefs, ideas, desire to speak),*listening* (without prejudice) and *respecting* (not judging others' perceptions being curious about them) in ensure that when *voicing* their own thoughts, they are building on the ideas and thoughts of others.

P:A, P:B, P:C, P:D refers to the participants who stayed for the duration of the research process.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to engaging in any research activity, the researcher needs to ensure that they are considering a range of ethical and moral questions about the nature and purpose of their research (Miles et al., 2014). Robson (2002) defines ethics and morals as two different but complementary concepts; the former being concerned with principles of action, the latter with choice. Miles et al. (2014) expand on this with a series of questions connected with place, purpose and validity of research, indicating that there is a need for researchers to ensure that ethics is considered before, during and after research takes place.

Having considered a range of ethical issues involved in the design and implementation of research, a number of actions were taken to ensure the safety and well being of participants engaging in the research. Along with cognisance of the University of Dundee ethical guidelines for research, the research process followed the British Sociological Association Guidelines for Research (Appendix J). In addition, because of the use of a dramatherapeutic model within the research process, cognisance was taken of the BADTh Code of Practice for Dramatherapists (Appendix K).

Ensuring that participants had an understanding of the nature and purpose of the research was a fundamental ethical consideration. Agreement from participants to the research process, content and implementation was gained with explicitly shared expectations (Miles et al., 2014) in a letter to each participant. Based on Creswell's (2007) standard letter template, this letter described the nature and purpose of the research, setting out how, what and where data would be collected from, how, why and with whom results from the research would be shared, and offering the opportunity at any stage to opt out of the research process. All participants signed a copy of this letter (Appendix L).

Drawing from therapeutic processes (for example, Jennings, 1998; Jones, 2007) and coaching models (for example, Hawkins, 2011; Rogers, 2012a) the concept of contracting with the group was introduced early into the process. Contracting sets out the purpose, parameters and goals of a session to ensure mutual understanding (Miles et al., 2014). For example,

quite early on in the process the participants' explicit focus veered towards themselves as individual practitioners rather than leaders (the latter being originally a part of the agreed discussion process). Re-contracting enabled the shift to be openly acknowledged and mutually understood. In general, contracting also enabled a brief revisiting of thoughts and feelings from previous sessions, reiteration of research focus and the chance to re-contract, or adapt the focus of study, if required. The result was a participant led process that enabled a focus on their professional practice within the constraints of a focus on the research question.

Contracting also enabled discussions about confidentiality and the importance of self-management to be raised. Miles et al. (2014) stress the importance of being clear about confidentiality and the danger of vagueness in the building of trust and working relationships between researcher and participant. Confidentiality was assured and requests to be kept out of any video or photographic footage used in the final documentation by one of the participants, along with a discomfort of being filmed or photographed by another led to me changing my requirement for this to form part of the evidence to be included in this final thesis.

Regarding self-management, the remit and purpose of the research was reiterated in the early sessions to ensure that participants created stories that enabled productive and constructive reflexive opportunities. This did not mean that challenging situations did not arise, but that the context of the challenge was within the boundaries held by the research process (Jones, 2007). Closing each interactive session with a reflective process was a way of creating a boundary for the session, and was a central part of the framing of each meeting. There was a ritualistic element to the opening (contracting) and closing of each session that enabled a safe space to be created (Jones, 2007). Creating safety within the group therefore created more opportunities for trust to be built between participants and between participants and myself as researcher and facilitator (Miles et al., 2014; Sarantakos, 2005).

In addition to the above measures, I also reflected on the potential impact of story creation and telling as powerful meaning making tools (Gersie, 1997; Lahad, 1993) and decided to source counselling services that could be

suggested for participants who found a need beyond the remit of the research group. I notified the participants of this information during the first introductory session. The organisations within which each participant worked provided counselling for staff and I sourced this information. I also sourced contact details of two local counselling services that would be unrelated to any of the participants' organisations. There was no intention for these services to be needed, and indeed this was raised by me in the initial meetings I had with the potential participants as well as in the agreement letter, however I recognised that there was an ethical responsibility for me as the researcher to ensure that the wellbeing of the participants had been considered (Miles et al., 2014).

Researcher bias is discussed later in this section but as it is an ethical issue, there is a brief mention of it here. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and Robson (2002) argue that research free of bias is unrealistic, particularly in the context of social research. Indeed, within the context of social construct(ionism/ivism) and interpretivist research, acknowledging the researcher bias is an integral part of locating the study. As will be discussed later (see section 3.9 and Table 3.3) one way of countering this issue is for the researcher to honestly and clearly state their position and the intention of the study. This was done during the initial individual meetings with participants who were interested in the study and also during the introductory session in October 2011.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION: METHODS

In keeping with the bricolage approach to the study, there were three main methods of data collection, these being unstructured group interviews, unstructured one-to-one interviews and observation through video footage I also engaged in research journaling and a brief exploration of this is given towards the end of this section. It should be noted that one participant chose to create a reflective journal during the process of the research and one extract from that journal is used as data due to its pertinence to the issues under discussion (see p.137 for journal extract). Table 3.2 indicates the data collection methods used in relation to Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the research process

Table 3.2: Data Collection Methods

Session/event – number and date	Session content – later observed through video footage	Group unstructured interview	One-to-one unstructured interview	Reflective journaling
11/11/2011 Introductory session				X
25/11/2011 Session 1	X	X		X
22/11/2011 Session 2	X	X		X
29/11/2011 Session 3	X	X		X
20/12/2011 Session 4	X	X		x
10/01/2012 1-1 interview			X	
20/01/2012 1-1 interview			X	
31/01/2012 Session 5	X	X		X
14/02/2012 Session 6	X	X		X
13/03/2012 Session 7	X	X		X

17/03/2012 1-1 interview			X	
10/04/2012 Session 8	X	X		X
11/04/2012 1-1 interview			X	
18/04/2012 1-1 interview			X	
09/04/2013 Evaluation Interview		X		X

3.7.1 USE OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interviews were used as a way of collecting both the group's experience and each individual participant's experience of creating and telling/sharing a 6PSM during the interactive sessions in Stage 1 of the research. For the purpose of this chapter, these interviews have been separated into one-to-one and group.

3.7.1.1 One-to-One Unstructured Interviews

These interviews were unstructured, or 'depth interviews' (Miller & Crabtree, 1999) which gave the individual participant the opportunity for depth of discussion drawn from their focus of interest around the theme of 'experiencing the 6PSM'. These interviews occurred with a participant after they had created and shared their story with the group during one of the Stage 1 interactive sessions (see Figure 3.1, p.83). Unlike Sarantakos' (2005) definition of unstructured interview which stems from unstructured questionnaires with open ended wording, the approach taken in this context is almost dialogic with the material organically evolving (Robson, 2002) from the participants. There are a number of advantages to this type of interview. In one-to-one interviews, the participant explores their own interest around a

central theme and therefore is more likely to uncover further areas of interest or meaning than with a directed interview. An unstructured approach to interviewing also allows for more flexibility of response from the participant and a more fluid output of discussion. It is also possible to gather a considerable amount of information in a relatively short period of time from both verbal and non-verbal 'language', offering a deeper range of data.

There are some disadvantages to this type of interview process. Participants can potentially avoid discussing challenging or uncomfortable issues which they perceive may portray them in an unflattering light. In order to address this issue, no interviews relating to the story creation/telling process occurred before the group had engaged in the initial stages of trust building which enabled a relationship to be formed between myself as the researcher and facilitator of the process and the participants as both individuals and as part of a group. Working with the group on trust formation was pivotal to ensuring their feeling of safety in relation to the individual interviews. Potentially challenging discussions were dealt with professionally and with a clear focus on the remit and purpose of the research process (Robson, 2002) which was to enable productive self-awareness and understanding of practice to develop.

Another potential disadvantage is that the level of flexibility in an unstructured interview means that it is not possible to standardise each participants' interview and therefore concerns about reliability might arise. However, in keeping with the paradigm from which the research focus was generated, the concept of flexibility and individual voice was to be encouraged as an outcome, therefore the lack of a standardised response from participants was not viewed as problematic. The central theme of 'experience of the 6PSM' was the jumping off point for each unstructured interview and this enabled the participant to have an understanding of the purpose of the interview session. This then generated discussion flowing from that central theme.

Finally, there was also the possibility of bias on the part of the researcher and/or participant is difficult to rule out as both may have particular areas of interest that they want or do not want to have addressed. In order to address

this, careful consideration was given to ensuring that bias or influence in responses was avoided. Where this was challenging to ensure, cognisance was taken of it to enable it to inform the outcome of the process, in keeping with the concept of the researcher-as-bricoleur (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

3.7.1.2 Use of Unstructured Group Interview

In much the same vein as the one-to-one unstructured interviews, group unstructured interviews took place at the end of each interactive session in Stage 1. These took the form of reflective group discussions. As explored above, these discussions began with the central theme of the participants' experiences of the 6PSM, and the discussions evolved organically from that central theme. Group interviews share some of the same advantages and disadvantages as the one-to-one unstructured interviews. For example, group interviews also allow for flexibility and a greater range of discussion points to be had. They can also enable a great deal of information to be gained in a short time period. An additional advantage would be the possibility that sharing of knowledge and understanding with others can encourage and increase the amount and depth of response from participants as they analogically bootstrap (Gentner, 2010; Kurtz et al., 2001) their experiences to those of others.

With regard to disadvantages, group unstructured interviews offer the same challenges to tangential concept development, researcher and participant bias and lack of standardisation as one-to-one interviews. An additional potential disadvantage lay in the challenge of sharing uncomfortable or challenging issues within a group context might pose a difficulty to some participants. This could lead to non-participation or participants not engaging honestly with the process. In order to mitigate for this, as will the one-to-one unstructured interviews, the requirement for trust to be present and relationships to be built was focused on. The additional focus for the reflective discussions at the end of the group sessions was to build trust within and between participants, not just between the individuals and myself as the researcher/facilitator. To do this, each of the first three sessions consisted of trust building games which broke down barriers between participants and opened up the space for dialogue as each game was unpacked and discussed as a group. In addition, the 6PSM process

itself acted as a framework within which challenging discussions could be held through the context of the story structure and the image cards used as part of that process.

Another potential issue in using group interviews was the possibility for domination of the group by one or more individuals might lead to some participants not being given the space to share their views if there is no moderation within the process. In order to address this challenge, during the group unstructured interviews, every effort was made to ensure all participants had the space to voice their experiences. Although the discussions were not structured or officially moderated, those that hadn't spoken were offered the space to speak directly either by myself as researcher or more often by the other participants.

3.7.1.3 Use of Observation through Video Recording

Each session within Stage 1 of the research process was videoed, including the reflective discussions at the end of each session previously referred to as the unstructured group interviews. Observation of participants' experiences of the 6PSM model and the related Image Theatre techniques and activities associated with it, was influenced by the *participant observation* (Robson, 2002) approach. This approach situates observation within the natural context of the participants, is open and flexible and is focused very much on the way in which reality is socially constructed by individuals based on their interactions with the world around them (Sarantakos, 2005). There are a number of advantages to this approach. Observation allows for participants' experiences to be understood within a real life context making the data richer and more useful. This approach also fits with the social construct(ionism/ivism) paradigm within which the research was situated. In addition, as the sessions would be videoed, there would be an accurate and full recording of each session negating the need for copious note taking during the session, or attempts to remember post-session, which could be skewed by, for example, temporal distance.

There are also disadvantages to this approach. There is the potential for the discomfort or awkwardness of participants with videoing leading to participants objecting. This same concern about discomfort may also lead to

inaccurate data as participants might alter their behaviours based on the fact that they are being recorded. Miles et al. (2014) indicate the value of honesty and transparency in the researcher-participant relationship, and the importance of giving full information to ensure that there is no vagueness in relation to the research process. Taking cognisance of this, and in order to address the issues about comfort and honest interaction due to the use of video recordings, very clear information was given to the participants about the use of recordings (video and audio) in their letter of agreement to ensure that all were fully informed. In addition, participants were given the option to indicate their desire not be included in any images that went forward into the final dissertation piece. Barron (2013) indicated that ethics in relation to videoing was a process rather than an event and in cases of discomfort or awkwardness, participants' wellbeing has to be paramount in the researcher's mind. As Stage 1 progressed, I took the decision not to include any video or photographic evidence in this final dissertation to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and also to ease any discomfort of participants in the process. This was relayed to them during the sessions.

Another disadvantage to this approach relates to the time-consuming nature of transcribing from recordings and notes, drawing time away from collating and analysing data. In order to address this, I chose to weigh the time taken to work with the recordings against the value that the recordings offered me. The recordings provided valuable opportunities for me to reflect on my experiences and the connections with those of the participants in the process, enabling the emergence of the crystallization process referred to earlier (Richardson, 2005; Selking, 2014). They offered an accurate recollection of the events of each session without me needing to note take during the session, creating a much more fluid and organic process for the participants. The transcription process was also useful in enabling me to collate and process my thoughts on the participants' experience as well as highlighting to me conflicts between my assumptions and the actual events recorded; they provided a valuable north star.

Finally, there is the potential for observer bias, or distortion due to the observer – in this case the researcher – approaching the work from their own

ontological and epistemological perspective. As with potential bias in the other methods used, careful consideration was given to ensuring that bias or influence was avoided. Where this was challenging to ensure, cognisance was taken of it to enable it to inform the outcome of the process, in keeping with the concept of the researcher-as-bricoleur (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). In addition, as mentioned above, I was able to use the recordings as a way of beginning to crystallize the experiences, connecting my observations from the recordings with what was actually being said by participants and later with the one-to-one unstructured interviews that each individual engaged with.

3.7.1.4 A Note on the Use of Reflective Journaling

The use of writing as a method to reflect on experiences has been explored already in Chapter 2 – Literature Review, and reflective journaling has been a key part of many educationalists' experiences of reflective practice (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Bolton, 2010; O'Connor et al., 2003). My view of reflective journaling, however, sees the experience of 'writing' being broader than the often thought of act of putting pen to paper. Drawing on my own experience of collaborative wri(gh)ting (Linds & Vettraino, 2008) I employed story construction using the 6PSM as a method of critical reflection, along with brief memo writing, audio recordings and the drawing together of images to create a bricolage of information that I connected to data collected through the other methods discussed in this section.

This collage of reflections has been used to inform my thought process as researcher, facilitator and sometimes co-participant of the process; to highlight and acknowledge the background that I bring to this research process. The advantages and disadvantages of this approach lie in the opportunity to add to the developing crystal of knowledge created by the research process, to understand the results of the research through an additional lens and to offer an open and transparent acknowledgement of bias in the process. Rather than mitigate against these, it is intended that the reader goes openly into the discussion with this perspective in view. The work in this collage has not been used as a source of data, however, these reflections have contributed to the final reflective piece offered in the Epilogue as a story of my doctoral journey.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Applying methodological bricolage to the analysis of qualitative data allows the researcher-as-bricoleur to draw on the most useful tools and approaches to hand in order to create a synergistic whole. In considering the typology of qualitative data analysis, Robson's (2002) categories provided a useful descriptor of models. Given both the paradigm in which the research was situated and the emergent nature of the research process, an *immersive* and *reflective* method appeared to be most appropriate. Robson (2002) indicates that *immersion approaches* are less structured allowing for more flexibility, and emphasise the researcher's *"insight, intuition and creativity"* (p.458) based on an element of expert knowledge. As I had previous knowledge and experience of the focus of the study – the 6PSM and related Image Theatre techniques – I brought this knowledge into the process as a way of interpreting data. In addition, Robson (2002) also describes the *editing approach* to qualitative data analysis. This approach has some structure to it through the use of coding, but codes are generated through researcher interpretation of what the data are indicating. There is, therefore, flexibility in this model to enable the researcher to explore patterns and consider similarities in order to generate a smaller thematic output.

In practice, both approaches were applied through a narrative model of analysis of the participants' experiences of the sessions in both Stage 1 and Stage 2. The immersion approach accepts the veracity of the observed sessions and interview data and that it they situated within a socially constructed reality. The editing approach also accepts that outcomes will be determined through the interpretation of patterns and experiences by the researcher, in this case using no a priori codes. Each of the participants engaged in storytelling about their experiences through both reflective (after-action) and reflexive (in-action) means. Narratives and ante-narratives became interwoven to create a holistic picture of the information given (Boje, 2001, 2006; Clandinin, 2016; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

3.9 A NOTE ON RESEARCHER BIAS

Although this study was not carried out within a formal scientific model, caution needed to be applied when considering the impact of researcher bias and effect on data analysis. I acknowledge a number of biases that had the

potential for impact on my approach to this study. As the researcher I had existing knowledge and experience of the 6PSM and having tentatively explored the model for professional development, I believed that it could engage individuals in a reflexive way of understanding professional practice. I had also worked in some capacity with the participants who became the core focus of my study and this had the potential to influence the approaches taken. In addition, my philosophical approach is situated within a relativist ontology believing that knowledge is socially constructed; this is a bias I also needed to be aware of when approaching this study. These biases reflect Robson's (2002) view that a number of possible biases need to be considered, these are:

- *Selective attention* – personal interest, expectation or viewpoint can influence what data the researcher pays attention to;
- *Selective encoding* – expectations of what might occur can influence what the researcher takes out of the data collected. This could be particularly true in an immersive approach where the researcher has knowledge and experience of the focus of study;
- *Selective memory* – note taking after an event can cause difficulty if there has been a long gap between experiences. This is pertinent not just for any note taking of the sessions that I as researcher engage in during Stage 1, but also for the participant unstructured interviews that occurred several weeks after the related session, and also for the evaluative interview which formed Stage 2;
- *Interpersonal factors* – how the researcher connects with the participants can have considerable influence on the data. Robson (2002) particularly indicates a difficulty here for researchers new to the individuals in the group and therefore seeking to establish comfort for themselves in the process. I would also suggest that having prior knowledge of the participants can also influence the way in which the researcher experiences the data gathered;

Given that I as the researcher had existing knowledge and experience of the focus of the study, and that my role was also to facilitate the sessions throughout Stages 1 and 2, in which I was also at points a co-participant, mitigating for bias was essential in the analysis of the data. A number of

theorists offer actions to consider in order to counter potential deficiencies in human analysis of data (for example, Miles et al., 2014; Robson, 2002; Sarantakos, 2005). Whilst it is not possible to remove all bias from analysis, acknowledgement is a fundamental part of the process to reducing them. In order to address some of the potential biases, a number of steps were taken; this is shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Potential Bias and Countering Action

Potential bias*	**Countering action**
Selective attention	• Self-awareness as researcher of the possibility of bias • Reference to different data sources • Some 'crystallization' (triangulation) through feedback from participants – Stage 2
Selective encoding	• No a priori codes were used • Codes were generated from the emerging data • 'crystallization' (triangulation) through different data sources
Selective memory	• Use of video footage and audio recordings meant no note taking during sessions or interviews and an accurate recording of events • Reflective journaling was done immediately after or within a few days of the event – session or interview • Awareness as researcher and acknowledgement of the possibility of selective memory issues with participants during reflective interviews in Stage 1 and during the Stage 2 evaluation interview. Reporting of this in findings.
Interpersonal factors	• Complex to address fully, open acknowledgement about researcher's prior knowledge of participants and their prior knowledge of each other • Acknowledgement that participants' engagement might be altered as a result of prior knowledge • Reiteration of the focus of the study in relation to their experiences of 6PSM, not my views on 6PSM • Use of a different facilitator in one session to help reduce bias
**biases adapted from Robson (2002)*	

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS: METHOD AND PROCESS

As a bricoleur, methodology and process for data analysis created opportunities for discovering and interpreting in a range of ways. As previously mentioned in this chapter, a narrative approach to data analysis was taken in order to create a holistic picture of the experiences of the participants. The format for this was open and flexible in keeping with the immersive nature of the process (Robson, 2002) and consisted initially of researcher reflections on sessions undertaken using the video footage. In addition, I made use of creative methodologies such as image making, and poetic and story writing as a way of making sense of the data from the sessions (Kemp, 2001; Selking, 2014). In the early sessions, these reflections formed the basis of my understanding rather than a more structured or considered form of analysis.

Reflexively I adapted my approach to analysis as the participants' one-to-one unstructured interviews began taking place. I used a form of manual coding, making notations in the transcriptions of the videoed sessions that allowed me to begin to discover patterns emerging. Saldaña (2011) refers to this phase as *initial coding*, an attempt to have a first sweep of data. This process was iterative; as each session occurred, data emerged that could be heuristically linked to previous sessions. First, second and third cycle encoding had identified further patterns that I linked to the three elements of the research question – exploration, interpretation and enhancement.

However, the video footage was only a part of the data collected. By the end of Stage 1, I had a considerable amount of video footage which I had manually explored in a heuristic fashion, linking emerging codes from the observations and the group unstructured interviews, to the one-to-one unstructured interviews. I also had a large amount of data from audio recordings which had been transcribed using a professional transcription company, this included the evaluative interview in Stage 2. Because of the amount of data, I opted to make use of the qualitative software package NVivo. I had considered another – Dedoose – but found NVivo easier to work with. The transcribed one-to-one unstructured interviews were uploaded to NVivo and I began a decoding and encoding process that ran

alongside the manual coding process I was engaged in with the video footage.

Crystallizing the outputs of the manual and computer coding and categorization process, along with my analytical reflections emerging, I was able to uncover themes developing from the codes. Saldaña (2011) indicates that themes are the outcome of a range of processes including coding, analytic reflection and categorisation; they do not emerge from coding alone. As these themes began emerging, I changed the categories I had created through NVivo to reflect the narrowing of identifiable patterns until five strong themes emerged.

Table 3.4 indicates the methods and process of data analysis throughout Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Table 3.4: Methods and Process of Data Analysis

Stage	Event/activity	Method of analysis
1	Video footage – Interactive 6PSM sessions	Manual coding – throughout Stage 1 and 2
1	Video footage - Unstructured group interviews	Manual coding – throughout Stage 1 and 2
1	Unstructured one-to-one interviews	NVivo coding – after Stage 1
2	Evaluation Session	NVivo coding – after Stage 2

3.11 RIGOUR, VERIFICATION AND CRYSTALLIZATION

In keeping with the social science, relativist perspective which I have based this research on, rather than discussing generalisability and validity often associated with a positivist paradigm, my focus has been on rigour and verification (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The nature of this piece of research is formed in the context of socially constructed knowledge and ways of knowing. In addition, the deliberately small sample in the study created opportunities to explore the verification and rigour of this research process rather than the transferability or generalisability of the outcomes as would be possible with a larger scale

study (Robson, 2002). What follows is consideration of the place of rigour and verification within this study, and the opportunities that reframing triangulation through the metaphor of crystallization (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005; Selking, 2014) can offer to aid both of these terms.

In the context of this study, rigour and verification refer to both the processes of designing and implementing the study (Robson, 2002). As previously mentioned, the design for this research was flexible allowing for manoeuvrability and adaptation in both the design and implementation (Robson, 2002). Considerable thought was given to the framework for content for each of the interactive sessions where the 6PSM process was explored and it was anticipated that the model for these would be shared with my doctoral supervisors as well as the participants in the process. The intention was that the planning of sessions, whilst containing key elements relating to the focus of the research (eg: the storytelling process including commentary and observations) would be allowed to evolve from the needs of the participants as there was a recognition that their learning may well be influenced or impacted by the reflexive and co-constructed nature of the model being used. In this way, a hermeneutic process was able to evolve ensuring a continual linking back to previous sessions and knowledge created for the participants.

A potential threat to rigour in the implementation of the study was considered to be bias. This has been specifically highlighted section 3.9 and it is useful to further explore the types of bias that can occur. Identified by Robson (2002), bias falls into three categories; respondent bias, researcher bias and reactivity.

As this study involves people, there was a potential for the participants (or respondents) to give answers or to engage in the process based on wanting to please the researcher (respondent bias). There was also the impact of the researcher's presence in the process to be considered and how respondents might alter the way they react to the changing dynamic (reactivity). Finally, there was the bias that the researcher brings to the process (researcher bais); in this case my own ontological and epistemological perspective as well as my history, culture, gender, experience and so on (Robson, 2002).

Rather than attempt to deny these biases, it is incumbent upon the researcher to acknowledge and account for them within the research process. One way of doing so was for me as the researcher to engage reflexively with the research process as it unfolded, noting my own bias as I worked through the dilemma of being researcher and participant (Robson, 2002). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Finlay (2014) echo this when discussing the fact that researchers bring many 'I's to their work and it is important to acknowledge and work with these meta-layers of influence. In order to address the issue of researcher bias, my own knowledge, experience and understanding of the subject area was openly divulged as part of the research process, and honest reflexive and reflective experiences were noted as part of a research 'collage' of thoughts most commonly understood as reflective journaling (Creswell, 2007; Etherington, 2004). Examples of elements within this collage are identified in Appendix M.1.

The issues of respondent bias and reactivity were initially addressed in two main ways. The manner in which the research focus was discussed with the participants concentrated attention on an interest in the model and the participants' experiences of the model. This emphasised the importance of participants engaging with no predetermination of how the model might be experienced, and with an open invitation to honest feedback which would support the development of a hermeneutic data gathering approach (Robson, 2002). Secondly, the way in which the interactive sessions involving the 6PSM were developed, with the focus remaining on the 6PSM model itself and the participants' interaction with it which was explored reflexively throughout the sessions and reflectively at the end of each session.

Another important tool in ensuring both rigour in process, and verification of the data collected was the concept of triangulation.

3.11.1 TRIANGULATION

Multiple methods research combines a range of different methodologies together to create a number of possible entry and exit points for data gathering and analysis (Robson, 2002; Maxwell, 2005). Triangulation enables the researcher to view particular elements of their subject from different perspectives, dependent on the typology of method used. In other

words, different sources, data collection methods, researchers/data gatherers or theories could be used to create a multi-dimensional picture of a particular topic (Miles et al., 2014; Patton, 1999; Robson, 2002; Sarantakos, 2005). Triangulating results offers the possibility to gain greater knowledge about a subject, partly because of the possibility of conflict in the data. Conflicting findings force researchers to dig more deeply into why such differences exist, thereby increasing the rigour of the data collected.

Despite the benefits of a triangulated approach, the concept has limitations. The nature of measuring and checking one finding against another to offer some form of proof or validity would indicate a positivist bias (Sarantakos, 2005). In addition, the term triangle conjours up a two dimensional image with a fixed point, rather than something open and three dimensional with many points of connection. This latter image more comfortably fitted with my approach to this research study, and therefore I considered crystallization as a concept rather than triangulation.

3.11.2 CRYSTALLIZATION: REFRAMING TRIANGULATION

If the purpose of triangulation is to create a multi-dimensional view of a subject, the better term would be the three dimensional version – a prism – of the two dimensional form – triangle. Richardson & St Pierre (2005) and Selking (2014) discuss the imagery of the crystal as a way of considering data analysis to ensure rigour. Rather than a fixed point around which the researcher can explore, crystals offer multiple points of growth and change. Research that draws from a number of different sources, methods and so on, has no central point and therefore offers multiple layers through which knowledge can be gained. Referring back to Loy's (1993) philosophical discussion about Indra's net, crystallization encourages multiple reflections and refractions creating different patterns, possibilities and responses, creating a deeper and more complex understanding of the subject at hand.

In order to develop the concept of crystallization in this study, data collection involved:

- Video footage of each interactive session in Stage 1 of the research process, which consisted of:

    - Participants' storytelling/sharing – with commentary and observation;
    - Engagement with Image Theatre work;
    - Group reflections at the end of the session;
- Audio recordings of interviews with participants after they told their story;

In addition, copies of the participants' stories (shown in Appendices N.1-N.6) and my own journaling collage output were used to explore and examine the data collected.

As data analysis began during the process of Stage 1 in order to develop an iterative and co-constructed approach, some themes were emergent prior to Stage 2 which enabled all but one of the participants to verify the initial and embryonic results (see Appendix M.2). The same participants who engaged in Stage 2 returned to the data more recently with a further verification of the results which they were developing with me for publication.

To summarise the above, checking for researcher's biases along with crystallizing results through hermeneutic interpretation involving participant feedback and input can aid the process of rigour and verification of research.

The following chapter explores the results from the research as well as discussion of these linked to the development of themes that emerged during the study.

CHAPTER 4 –
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULTS OVERVIEW

The results from this research have been drawn from the stories and narratives of the participants I worked with over a one year period. Through the sharing of their professional, and personal, experiences the participants have offered an opportunity to examine a story creation methodology normally contextualised within a drama therapeutic setting, through the lens of a different professional field; that of education.

My presentation of the research results connects the research question identified at the end of Chapter 2 to the thematic development uncovered through the data analysis. The three areas of exploration, interpretation and enhancement of practice highlighted in the research question will be used as headings under which the data themes will be examined. After each sub-theme discussion, the findings will be summarised to ensure cohesion in the overall piece. In addition, after each of the three areas of the research question have been examined through the themes, the related findings will be summarised.

The five themes emerging from the research data are:

- Experiencing the 6-Part-Story-Method (6PSM) Process;
- Trust and Vulnerability;
- Embodiment and Physicality;
- Insight and Reflexivity;
- Transformational Moments.

Linked to the three areas of interest in the research question, the themes will be examined as follows:

Exploring Practice: Results

- Experiencing the 6PSM Process;
- Trust and Vulnerability;

- ***Interpreting Practice: Results***Embodiment and Physicality;
- Insight and Reflexivity;

Enhancing Practice: Results

- Transformational Moments.

In addition, the timeline which summarises the data collection events within the research process (see Figure 3.1) can be found on p.83, in order to more easily identify specific points in the research process.

At the end of the results and discussion of each theme, a summary has been provided to pull together the main findings for the reader. The discussion of the findings has been separated out under each area of interest and included as the final three sections of the chapter. So, for example, the discussion of the findings relating to the themes of 'Experiencing the 6PSM Process' and 'Trust and Vulnerability' which are the themes under the area of interest focused on 'Exploring Practice' can be found in section 4.5 under the heading Exploring Practice: Discussion.

The data used as evidence in this chapter are taken from video footage of the sessions carried out during the data collection period, interviews with the participants after their story telling sessions and a longer term evaluative interview carried out a year after the sessions involving the 6PSM process had been completed. For the purposes of identifying which session the data comes from, the following key has been developed:

- Participants are referred to as 'A', 'B' and so on, ie: 'P:A' is Participant A;
- Video sessions will be cited at 'VS' followed by the number of the session, ie: VS4 for Videoed session 4;
- Post story telling reflective interviews will be cited as 'PSRI';
- Anonymous post story telling reflective interview will be cited at 'APSRI'
- The longer term evaluative interview will be cited as 'EI';
- Reflective journal entry will be cited as 'RJ'

4.2 EXPLORING PRACTICE: RESULTS

4.2.1 EXPERIENCING THE 6PSM PROCESS

Analysis of the participants' experiences from both the sessions themselves and the interviews following suggests that all participants found the 6PSM structure to be a way of enabling a story creation process to occur that supported their personal and professional development in some way.

As the participants were directed to consider their professional practice and situations within their workplace that they wanted to critically reflect on, it would be expected that the stories contained parallels with their own working lives. This resonates with findings from Dent-Brown and Wang's (2006) research into the mechanism of story creation through 6PSM. The findings of my study suggest that all of the participants found the process of working with the 6PSM stimulating and thought provoking, each having a different reaction to the process of story creation and the experience of telling and listening, for example:

> *"I think it put in the forefront of my mind that I was being reflective all the time."* (P:D, EI)

> *"It did help me kind of order my thoughts, see things clearer, see things from different perspectives."*(P:C, EI)

The findings also suggest that there is a complexity to the 6PSM process itself which fostered some initial reluctance to engage fully. This is noted particularly by P:A in VS2 who struggled to see a connection between the storytelling process and the 'real world' issues that can be engaged with through the process. P:A indicated that this was less to do with the complexity of the structure and more to do with bridging the gap between her professional reality and the creation of a fictional story that could represent that reality (for example, Gersie, 1997; Landy, 2009, 2011, Penzik, 2011, 2013).

P:A's breakthrough came through discussion with the other participants at the end of VS2 where the focus of critical self-reflection on professional practice through fictional storytelling was explored through questions about the 6PSM process.

> *"It's the first time this has really clicked for me. It's taken a long time for me to 'get' it."* (P:A, VS2)

This element of doubt was also present for P:C who reflected on this during his post-story interview:

> *"..initially there's a reticence and a reluctance in there* [to the process]*...I think it's getting used to the actual process of what can be quite complex through the storytelling method itself."*(P:C, PSRI)

P:C seemed to make the transition to this new process (the 6PSM) by connecting his understanding of other techniques that require similar approaches:

> *"I know through doing similar things with the drama techniques you can convey things like metaphors and symbols and then the story."* (P:C, PSRI)

Part of the participants' perceived anxiety about the process initially appeared to be to do with understanding the structure and the relevance of this in the process. During VS3 when the 6PSM process was introduced, P:C highlighted a concern, saying:

> *"am I going to make the story fit the cards?"* (P:C, VS3)

This reflected an anxiety P:C later explained, that the story he wanted to tell wouldn't 'fit' with the images/cards he'd been given. In his reflective interview P:C refers to this, saying:

> *"...it's strange because I actually didn't want to do that story.....I'd written a completely different story and then I thought it was facile and so maybe that said something about me wanting to ....a bit about preparation and readiness to address it."* (P:C, PSRI)

He adds in:

> *"I don't know why .....I'd actually rewrote it not very long before it came up* [in the session] *I remember that, and thinking 'what the hell, just go for it!'"*(P:C, PSRI)

These findings suggest a need to trust and face some element of vulnerability in the process; this is explored in the second theme emerging from the research later in this chapter.

The data also suggest that participants played with the linearity of the 6PSM structure for story telling which led to the process itself becoming more flexible, or malleable, once the story was created. For example, in VS3, P:B responded to a 6PSM story told by an external practitioner (see Appendix O for 'John's' story):

> *"It wasn't in order, the cards, but each card did its job."* (P:B, VS3)

P:B also commented in the same session that she saw the first three elements of the process (character, task and helpful force) as all being the main character in the story.

P:B made use of the opportunity to play with the structure in order to explore her own story creation/telling process during VS6. In her telling of her story, P:B explored a linear process in her creation and initial telling of the story, starting with the main character being a girl in a cage (see Appendix H for cards). She stated that the girl had chosen to be in the cage as she perceived the outside environment as threatening. P:B went on to add that the girl was high up in the air and saw herself above everyone else. The task (see Appendix N.2 for story and cards) was to help the girl come out of the cage and come down.

P:B went on to describe the helpful force – a wise 'all seeing eye' – before moving onto the hindering force which was an image of a skull. At this point in the story telling process, P:B re-positioned herself as character within the structure in order to aid her understanding of the story. She stated:

> *"So I see myself as the skull* [pointing at the fourth card, hindering force]*, I suppose. Initially I thought I was* [pointing at the character card, the girl in the cage] *but now I think I'm*[pointing at the hindering force card, the skull]***."**(P:B, VS6)

Throughout the question and observation element of the session that followed, P:B continued to restructure the six elements of the story; in

essence she was ‘reflexing’, or ‘reflecting-in-action’.. At one point early on in this part of the process, she explored three of the elements through the cards as follows:

> *“I think for the skull* [fourth card – hindering force] *I think it’s going to be OK actually but I think for this person* [points to the first card, image of a girl in a cage – character card] *it’s going to be* [picks up the sixth card, an abstract image that had been referred to as fire – ending card – and places it on top of the character card] *it’s going to be……..it can’t carry on.”* (P:B, VS6)

She then continued to explain the task in more detail:

> *“The task for me is to try and understand how I can deal with the person in the cage. So the task for me is really the skull* [hindering force] *and moving the skull.”* (P:B, VS6)

Again, P:B referred back to the card that she made a direct connection with and considered the need for behaviour change in some form to enable a change in the overall story.

P:D also moved elements of the story method in the interpretation of her story. The first part of her story, the character, was an image of a boat. The fourth part of her story, the action, was an image of a fish. In the creation of her story, the boat and fish become one and the same character as a result of changes in the story. P:D discussed this in VS5, extract shown below:

> P:C *it’s interesting that the boat’s*[the first card, character] *undergone two changes and is about to undergo a third. Is that inevitable?*
>
> P:D *yes, I don’t think there’s a way back for the fish* [the fifth card, the action]*. The fish doesn’t want to look bitter and tell on the cat.*
>
> P:C: *could there ever be two boats?*
>
> P:D *funnily enough the fish, when it was a boat, did say to the elephant [the third card, the helpful force], could they not be boats together but the elephant said no and the animals told the fish that the*

cat [the fourth card, the hindering force] *had said that they wanted to be the only boat.*

P:C *the fish has had a terrible time. It's had to change twice. The boat and the fish are bending over backwards to share.*

Interesting to note is that the task within the story (the second card), which was an image of a flower and which P:D initially stated represented an island that the character needed to look after, did not appear as part of the story. Instead the focus was on the change that took place for the character.

All of the stories told were rife with symbolism brought to the process through the use of the deck of cards. For example, the gun card in P:D's story (told in VS5) was symbolic of the ending of something. This card was the sixth in the process therefore representing an 'ending' or consequences of the main action in the story. However, P:D also stated that it represented a finality in relation to the main character's situation and the need to cope with discomfort. In the discussion following the storytelling, the following exchange taken from VS5 occurred:

P:C "*the gun means violence to me. Is this a hard thing?"*

P:D "*not violent, but the fish feels there's been a lot of turmoil."*

P:C "*is it scary for the fish?"*

P:D "*yes, it's a bit scary. It won't be in its comfort zone.*"

Later in her reflective interview on the story, P:D discussed briefly the part of the story that the image of the gun represented, echoing her initial thoughts about the gun representing the end of something which would be uncomfortable but not injurious:

"So I think where the gun is now the change in perspective would be, that it would just end being the boat…." (P:D, PSRI)

In P:C's story, the hindering force within the 6PSM process became tricky for him because it was a counter intuitive image; that of a deer. P:C's initial perspective on the symbol of the deer was that this represented peace and gentleness and he struggled with this image. However, a deeper reflection

on the story he told and the link with this element of the process uncovered the concept of a deer as proud, aloof and solitary. Later in response to another story where an image of a key was used as a hindering force, P:C had a similar reaction, when he stated:

> *"Paradox, paradox, I'm struggling with that! Keys are helpful, keys are helpful!"* (P:C, VS7)

P:B's story, like the others in the group, contained a number of symbols. However, her story appeared to provoke a deeper reflection from the group and P:B herself about the meaning attributed by individuals to images; in particular the picture of the skull that P:B used to describe her own need to change.

During P:B's storytelling session – VS6 – she said of this card:

> *"The skull is my perception...being stuck or dead in my thinking, being rigid and unable to move. As opposed to a face which is soft tissue and can move, a skull is fixed.....and that's my threat, it's around my own fixed, rigid view."*(P:B, VS6)

The response by another participant created a useful discussion point for the group in relation to symbolism and the interpretation individuals put onto images. This exchange highlighted the need for safety within the group in the process of telling and exploring a story. It also highlighted the challenge that multiple interpretations can offer; as P:B stated:

> *"I do think you need to be really mindful of abstract symbols becoming different barriers to actually understanding. I think 99% of the time, they do aid* [understanding] *but occasionally you can get caught up in the symbols."* (P:B, EI)

For P:B, this particular incident created a 'striking moment' (Cunliffe, 2002, p.42), also referred to as a sticky moment (Corlett, 2012); a difficult reflective experience to work through and one that created some conflict within the participant about her connection with the 6PSM as a critically reflective tool. Dent-Brown and Wang (2006) discuss this in relation to the different levels of emotional connection with the story content for the participants of their study.

Using the 6PSM as a vehicle, P:B took the opportunity in part to use the storytelling process to move herself closer to understanding her story more, and yet at the same time, created distance for herself in hindsight through her comments about abstraction (Dent-Brown & Wang, 2006).

As her later Stage 2 comments show, P:B appeared at first to be ambiguous to the usefulness of the process. However, she went on to add that the process facilitated trust amongst the group and also enabled a de-personalisation of real story which was useful *"particularly when you do work with people, you might not want to give the whole story away."* (P:B, EI)

The abstraction of the process appeared to have enabled the participants to take a step away from their own personal story; a concept that would be referred to as aesthetic distancing (for example, Pendzik, 2011, 2013). Aesthetic distancing will be returned to later in this chapter as it links to the themes of trust and insight built through this research process.

The 6PSM process was used as a framework for the reflective process during the sessions and some of the participants used the approach to support their practice after the sessions. For example, P:C spoke about the impact of the process on helping to support him in dealing with difficult meetings since the sessions:

> *"..it helped me prepare for a very difficult meeting I had where I felt I was being antagonised or under threat and I really needed to think about how I was going to manage that situation, not just for the immediate future but for a long-term kind of safety…….because I looked at the cards again before I went to the meeting just to give myself a kind of short reminder for myself."* (P:C, EI)

P:C also indicated that for him the 6PSM process was an important catalyst for meaning creation:

> *"..the cards were a vehicle, a conduit..helping me to deconstruct meaning or construct reality around something in an abstract way without getting into all the machinations of it."* (P:C, EI)

P:D used the 6PSM as a catalyst for reflective writing which appeared to have lasted as an impact a year after the 6PSM sessions had finished. In the evaluation interview at the end of the data collection process, P:D stated:,

> *"Since doing*[the 6PSM process with the group]*, I have done something that I've never done before…..I wrote down something that happened just to get it out of my head and onto paper……I left it for a couple of days and then went back and was able to look and try to see other people's points of view from it."* (P:D, EI)

For P:C, the 6PSM structure initially felt restrictive and she didn't follow on with the use of the cards. However, she found the experience of sharing the process with the group useful:

> *"I must admit, I don't think about the cards. I don't think I use them particularly in terms of reflection. I think for me, it was about a group of people that you felt safe with. So I suppose the technique was in some ways secondary to that and it was just a safe place every so often that I could come and reflect on things and I trusted the perspectives of the people in the group. The cards were to facilitate that"* (P:C, EI)

P:A also felt the challenge of creating her story, however this was more connected to her emotional reaction to the story she wanted to tell rather than the process itself:

> *"I found it hard to do. I found I felt very exposed."* (P:A, VS4)

Indeed during VS3, P:A specifically noted the way in which the process and the cards used enabled her to see someone else's story clearly; she stated:

> "*for me, I got it because of the cards. I could visualise the cards and it helped me with putting the story together…….I could see the story coming alive in the cards."* (P:A, VS3)

4.2.1.1 Summary

The data in relation to the theme of the participants' experiences of the 6PSM suggest that the process itself enabled an exploration of and interpretation of the participants' stories in a way that created opportunities to

apply a critically reflective lens to their professional practice. The 6PSM is not in itself a complex structure; there are six clear parts, each with an identifying purpose. However, there was anxiety about the creation of a story initially, as the participants played with the process and became used to the structure and the images used. A key finding in relation to the experience of the process was the benefit of using the story creation and telling process as a platform for further critical reflection and reflexive behaviour. For P:C for example, the story telling sessions came at a useful point professionally as he wrestled with challenges that he was able to directly change in the moment (reflexively) because of the story process, echoing Gabriel and Connell's (2010) view that stories told in the right moment and the right context, can enable a change in perspective and behaviour.

Although the 6PSM has a defined structure, it was possible for the participants to create flexibility in how they played with the process, which each person did to varying degrees during the collaborative exploration and interpretation of the story sessions. P:B in particular made use of the malleability of the structure to move the functions of the six elements around resulting in an apparent deeper realisation about her own character's progress and impact in the action of the story. The telling of the initial story followed a linear path but the knowledge was co-created with the other participants as she unpacked the story content (Corlett, 2012; Gabriel & Connell, 2010). In addition, the use of the image cards (see Appendix H) added a visual cue to the process which appeared to enable participants to connect more physically with the various elements of the story they were creating. The visual imagery seemed to have been a conduit to greater learning.

Another important result from the data analysis appeared to be recognition of the importance of trust and safety in relation to the development of an understanding of the 6PSM as a method, as well as engaging the willingness and desire to work through stories collaboratively in order to learn. The participants' trust of each other, myself as researcher/facilitator and also the 6PSM process itself appeared to develop quickly and strengthen over time. There was an initial level of anxiety about the structuring of the story through the 6PSM, particularly about the ability to make the cards 'fit' the stories that

the participants wanted to tell. This led to an exploration of the structure and an enhanced realisation for some that the stories told emerged almost reluctantly as the participants tested the safety of the group creation in order to feel safe enough to explore their fictional narratives (Corlett, 2012; Stuart, 2001).

The importance of trust and vulnerability is a second emerging theme from the data and is discussed below.

4.2.2 TRUST AND VULNERABILITY

Findings from the sessions and subsequent interviews with the participants suggest that all participants found the experience of telling their story/ies thought provoking and sometimes extremely challenging. Language used to describe the experience at times included feeling liberated, excited and curious as well as exposed, worried and anxious. This mixture of emotional reactions to the storytelling process, mirrors research into transformational change experiences through 'reflexion'(reflexive action), where individuals have a tendency to set up emotional barriers to any real investigation of their practice (Fook, 2010; Pässilä et al.., 2015; Stuart, 2001).

For me as researcher and facilitator, ensuring that there was a physical, mental and emotional safe space in which to work was pivotal in enabling the group to feel open to exploration. As P:B stated:

> *"….it gave you a safe space out of what you were doing day to day to think about some of the issues that were around for us at the time."* (P:B, EI)

P:B also noted during the evaluation interview at the end of the data collection process, that despite a clear signed agreement (see Appendix L) with all participants, she still felt a real need during the first stage of the process, to get clarity about who would see the output of the research because so much of the participants' self-reflection was involved:

> *"…what was a real issue for me is …you can expose yourself in that way, and to say the things that I was talking about weren't very nice. And they're not easy to admit, they're not easy to talk about…we definitely checked out about this, that there was an initial reservation*

and quite a few of us began talking about who will know about this? Who will get to hear this?" (P:B, EI)

This was an issue that was shared by P:C who added during the same evaluation interview:

"You can expose a lot of rawness in somebody. You know, quite powerful…..I think the cards can evoke and do evoke a lot of emotive reactions." (P:C, EI)

For P:B, what enabled her to feel safe to explore her challenges within the team was a sense of trust:

"I think it worked well with us because we trusted each other."(P:B, EI)

The experience of trust was exploratory itself in the first three sessions where participants were led through a series of drama exercises and games designed to foster trust building (see Appendix Q for a detail of games/exercises used). In Sessions 1 and 2, the 'messiness' of group connection was experienced through game playing where participants took turns to lead each other around the space with those being led having their eyes closed. Through this, levels of comfort and discomfort emerged and the importance of safety was highlighted specifically, for example in this exchange:

P:C "*It's been very cathartic and it makes you more conscious of your own processes. It feels very safe."*

P:B "*I feel safe that it's going to get clearer"* (VS2)

At the outset, P:D was very uncomfortable with the use of the camera to video the sessions. She didn't voice this but instead, on several occasions in the first session, she can be seen moving, or attempting to move, out of camera shot. As the sessions continued, her acceptance of the camera appeared to increase and by the end of the sessions, she mostly seemed to be unaware of the camera positioning.

P:Csaid that he focussed on "taking care of the leader" by trying to help them lead. This is indicative of later 'rescuing' behaviours exhibited by P:C

as the sessions unfolded and explored in the section on Insights. As the only male participant it was perhaps not surprising that the issue of gender was raised by P:C in relation to the activities:

> *"Men don't touch each other. Men are not programmed to do this sort of thing but switching to this is very good."* (P:C, VS1)

However, there was no further discussion or comment made by P:C or any of the other participants about the issue of gender as the group evolved and it is not clear from the data whether there was any impact in relation to gender on P:C's engagement with the work. Another potential factor impacting on the level of trust within the group was its size. There were four participants involved in the data collection and the smaller number appeared to potentially aid the sense of collaborative venture and the ability to socially construct opportunities for discourse about practice in a trust-filled environment (Keevers & Treleavan, 2011; Pässilä et al., 2015; Rowe, 2008, Rowe, 2000). P:C noted, for example, *"it's not a big group...it just felt really nice because it felt that you really do trust each other when we all meet together."* (P:C, VS3)

For me as researcher and facilitator, another important point to stress was the remit and scope of the research and the group's activity with the participants to ensure that they looked after their own safety in terms of the stories that they brought to the group sessions. The role of aesthetic distancing was explored particularly in VS2 in relation to how the stories could be created through 6PSM; as mythical and fantastical constructs rather than real world experiences, and this helped to create a safer space for exploration even though there was a tendency to still attempt to identify the 'reality' behind the image.

The ability of each participant to be fully open with the rest of the group in the storytelling process became an important focus as the sessions progressed, although the expressions of trust became more analytical and less explicit. The fictionalising of each participants' story also created opportunities for connections to be made between the stories; at times this appeared to take some of the participants by surprise because of the abstract nature of the stories told (Dent-Brown & Wang, 2006; Gabriel & Connell, 2010). P:C's reflection on his story telling process within the group indicated

that he did not want to tell the story he wound up telling. P:C's split decision to tell his story appeared to be indicative of his own developing trust and also his unconscious or sub-conscious desire to explore experiences in his professional life that had challenged him; albeit examining them through a fictional medium. The importance of trust as a transformational element for him in his experience of telling his 'hidden' story comes across clearly in how he reflected on the experience with a fellow participant after the session:

> P:C *"my reflection after I told my story was, I was exposing myself there and I was talking about something that was actually quite horrible and not easy to talk about and I didn't do things well and I know I didn't do them well. It was a very powerful experience."*
>
> P:A *"that's where the trust comes in."* (VS5)

For P:A, trust also appeared to be a vital component of the work, not just in the initial stages but as the sessions progressed and her connection with the group seemed to enable her to feel comfortable in the stories she offered. P:A told her first story in VS4 following a fellow participant's story, and her opening thoughts to the story were about discomfort and a feeling of exposing herself. The level of emotional connection also surprised her and she reflected on this at the end of VS4. She referred back to this discomfort in her reflective interview (PSRI) when she explored some of what challenged her:

> *"maybe there is the bit about being judged and feeling that people have an expectation or a sort of preconceived idea about you as a leader. And in the reflection, it's like a weakness, a great weakness may be exposed that might make that person change their opinion."* (P:A, PSRI)

In reflecting at the end of the subsequent session – VS5 – P:A referred to her own storytelling and sharing experience, stating:

> *"In sharing the story, there's an admission there that you weren't perfect, you're flawed…there's an element of thinking if they know it*

> *was my story, would it just be an affirmation of my lack of ability?"* (P:A, VS5)

This insecurity about the reaction of others to her story and the discovery of new self-knowledge emphasises the potential for underlying anxieties to surface that are connected to the power dynamic that exists when one is vulnerable in the presence of others(Pässilä et al., 2015; Stuart, 2001). As Fels (2009a) suggests, there is something courageous about the act of storytelling even when that story is mythical, if there is an element of critical self-reflection involved.

Although not explicitly referenced by the participants in the findings, the importance of the listener as a partner, and sometimes co-creator, in the storytelling process appears to be implicit in the outcomes and actions of the group. As Gersie (1990; Gersie & King, 1997) and Simmons (2006b) suggest, the act of sharing stories can create deeper knowledge and understanding of self through analogous bootstrapping (Gentner, 2001; Kurtz et al., 2001); connecting one's own story to another's by understanding similar ideas. Throughout all of the videoed sessions, there was what Isaacs (1999) would term 'dialogue' between the participants about the stories unfolding. Dialogue moves telling and listening beyond the realms of discussion into a much deeper form of understanding. Dialogue requires those participating to suspend their own preconceived ideas, knowledge and understanding in order to truly listen respectfully to the others in the group so that when an individual gives voice to their thought process, they are genuinely building on what the previous participants have said (Isaacs, 1999). This can be most obviously seen in VS8, the final session using 6PSM where P:A's story was used anonymously to build a shared story process. P:A spoke about the anonymity of the story being a positive experience for her, implying that the group listened without judgement because they did not know whose story it was:

> *"I think people do attribute qualities and have an opinion about you as a person. And I think if they know the story is yours, they're already making assumptions before they even hear the story or they hear about the story and they think 'oh that's about this, that or the next*

> *thing.' Whereas when the story's anonymous, nobody really knows who it is or where the story is coming from or what it's about. So I think I got a far more honest response and that was quite useful...I thought that was quite useful."* (P:A, APSRI)

During VS8, the group worked together to create a physical and embodied sense of the story through using Image Theatre (Boal, 1979, 2003; Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015) techniques. The depth of dialogue about the work during the process suggests that they were 'reflexing' – listening reflexively, and their responses manifested through physical movements in many cases – what could be termed 'reflexion' (reflexive action), adapting the term from its scientific roots. For example, when the participants discussed the physical freedom that some of the characters within the images created appeared to have, P:C swayed from side to side before then explaining the freedom of choice her character had, echoing physically the discussion she was part of. The group appeared to build on their individual knowledge and understanding of self through the work they did with each other, listening and responding be key elements of this. P:D's reflections written in a journal she kept during the process suggest that the sharing of stories and connecting in was important to new knowledge creation for her:

> *"*[P:C's story] *made me reflect about my own situation in life. I always seem to be on a road to 'somewhere', often not sure why I started on that road and if I had thought hard enough about whether it was the right road for me to be on*….[P:C's story] *also made me think …that perhaps I can put obstacles in the way and concentrate on the negative as opposed to the positive with some changes that effect me."* (P:D: RJ)

An interesting limitation of the data regarding the group trust, relates to the ways in which the participants reacted to me as facilitator of the sessions as well as researcher. Although I made no direct request for feedback about my role as facilitator (an area of the study I would seek to amend in further work on this process) there were some oblique references to it particularly at the beginning of the process.

In VS2, during the reflective element at the end, P:B and P:C both commented on my role:

> P:B "*the session was thought provoking. It was clear for me tonight, what the links were. We definitely see you as facilitator of the group."*
>
> P:C "*you were more relaxed tonight, you didn't talk so much!* "(VS2)

Other than those comments, there was no further explicit discussion or comment offered during the sessions about my role in relation to trust or building trust although P:B did refer to this during her post story reflection interview in relation to a discussion about VS6:

> *"when we're together, I feel a sense of it's not all 'on you go Elinor', you know, show us what you can do…….we are here as a group, we made this commitment. You kind of brought us together, and it does need you to facilitate it, but not in a sense of, yeah, well, get on with it, like we're reluctant school kids."* (P:B, PSRI)

She added:

> *"I try because I trust you."* (P:B, PSRI)

This is particularly pertinent given that a visiting colleague from Canada facilitated the seventh session (VS7) with the group's agreement and therefore they experienced a change in arrangements that could have potentially impacted on their working process. In relation to the second facilitator, the feedback from the participants indicated that the experience had been useful, although not all elements worked for all participants. There were some comments about the pace being challenging as well as one of the activities – the creation of a reflective Haiku – however there were no comments about the facilitator or facilitation itself which is intriguing and worth further study.

4.2.2.1 Summary

The findings from the data about trust and vulnerability in the group during their experiences of 6PSM suggest that the participants felt that trusting each other and the process were essential elements of the work. P:A, P:B and

P:C all made numerous references, both within the sessions themselves and in reflective interviews afterwards, to the powerful nature of the storytelling process, the potential for emotional reaction to the story creation and telling experience and the importance of feeling comfortable to share, despite the stories being fictional. In addition, very early on in the process, there was a need to ensure clarity for all participants about the nature, remit and purpose of the research to allay concerns individuals had about where the output of the research was to be shared. The findings suggest that the participants needed to feel confident about how and where the results of the research would be shared in order to trust myself and each other and to be able to engage fully in the research process.

This anxiety mirrors the concept that there can be danger in the telling of stories and that engaging in critically reflective processes, even those bound up in fictional creations, requires a sensitivity in facilitation and an awareness of how individuals within the group will respond (Fook, 2010; Pässilä et al., 2015).

Building trust within the group was an important developmental process which appeared to enable the experiences of creating, telling and sharing fictional stories based on real world professional challenges not to become confessional experiences (Kemp, 2001). Instead they appeared to offer the opportunity for a depth of understanding to be gained, not just by the creator/teller but also by the other participants engaging in the collaborative reflection. Although not explicitly referenced by the participants, the act of listening intently appears to have implicitly influenced the collaborative reflexive processes of the group as a whole.

As already discussed, trust in my processes as a researcher was therefore very important to the group. Knowing how, what and where the output of the research was to be disseminated was crucial to the confidence building within the group and their feeling of safety around the work they were doing.

It is interesting to note that the findings do not suggest any influence or impact in relation to the facilitator of the research or the process of facilitation adopted, and this is particularly significant given that an external visitor facilitated one of the sessions. However, the ability to trust the facilitator was

acknowledged as important. Facilitation was not a focus of the research process and as a result, no tangible evidence of impact was measured.

4.3 INTERPRETING PRACTICE: RESULTS

4.3.1 EMBODIMENT AND PHYSICALITY

As has been suggested in Chapter 2 – Literature Review, 'reflexion', or reflexive action is about reflection-in-action, the ability to react and change in the moment (Fook & Gardner, 2007; Mezirow, 1991). Embodied reflexive action is action taken from a physically understood way of knowing, feeling the change within one's body and acting on that change, be that consciously (Fels, 2009a; Finlay, 2014; Smears, 2009) or sub-consciously (Linds, 2008). This could arguably be termed embodied 'reflexion'. Initial analysis of the data from the videoed sessions and interviews with participants suggests that each participant experienced embodied reflexive moments at different points in the research process and that these moments enabled them to explore, interpret and enhance their understanding of their own professional practice.

Embodiment took two main forms; one form of embodiment took place through connection with the development of roles and characters within the story creation/telling process. As the stories were told, the teller and listeners evidenced a range of connections with the elements of theirs and others' stories. An interesting point to note is the ease and fluency with which the participants spoke as and about the characters within their story, almost as though the act of embodying the character that they were discussing was part of their sub-conscious already (see also Smears, 2009). During VS5, P:A told her story (Appendix N.1), following which the usual process of interpretation and observation occurred. The following is an extract from the dialogue between the participants early on in this interpretive period:

> P:C *"I like the idea of the forest, can you tell me more about it?"*
>
> P:A *"what Libra didn't see in the forest was anything of value. But she hadn't been looking properly. But she did appreciate that there were things in the forest that shouldn't be taken."*

The act of enacting led all participants to gain new knowledge. PD said of the enactment of elements of her story:

> *"I've never really contemplated saying no. I've never…..it never occurred to me that I could say no…….so the enactment made me question…to see how happy I would be to question the wise elephant.* [It made me see] *that they are not only taking on board what the cat is saying, but they're seeing the whole picture that I'm not seeing."* (P:D, PSRI)

In P:C's story, the first element (character card) was an image of a mountain (Appendix N.3). His connection with this element became obvious as he questioned the rationale for the mountain's desire to move. During the interpretation and observation part of the session he asked the following of the mountain:

> *"The mountain can't move, it's fixed. Why can't it move?"*
>
> *"Should this mountain change and if so, what should it change?"*
>
> *"Does the mountain want to be a mountain or does it want to be something else?"* (P:C, VS4)

At the end of the session, P:C said:

> *"*[These questions] *why do you, the mountain want to go on this journey? Do you know why? Why don't you just stay? Why would you put yourself through that? It's made me reconsider the perception I have of the mountain."* (P:C, VS4)

P:C identified with the character of the mountain so strongly that the questions around the character had a considerable impact on him. He returned to Session 5 and offered the following at the evaluation part of the session:

> *"I haven't had the chance to say this but for me….I was the mountain, the mountain was me. I think one of you said in the first 15 seconds 'why did the mountain have to move?' and I was like……I don't know. I hadn't thought of that, I just thought it was inevitable……and that made me think about how I cope with the process of change…..it was really quite profound. It was a jaw dropping moment."* (P:C, VS5)

The emotional connection P:C had to his own situation was given an avenue through which to manifest as a fictional character within his mythical or fantastical story. In this way the story creation and telling process enabled P:C to project his frustrations and questions about change into a third party, the character of the mountain. He was then able to embody those emotions through the filter of the character created, witnessing both himself as 'actor' in the process beginning to understand the 'character' he was playing (Boal, 1995; Forgasz, 2014) and engaging in metaxic moments of reflexive action.

A second form of embodiment was more tangibly evident in the findings and moved the 6PSM process into a dramatic or theatrical realm through the application of drama and theatre conventions where the participants entered a form of dramatic reality (Pendzik, 2008, 2013) enabling them to very obviously leave their ordinary or real worlds to enter into an imaginary realm. Considering the findings in relation to the application of drama and physical Image Theatre (Boal, 1995, 2006) and movement conventions, initial data analysis from the videoed sessions and from interviews with participants suggest that the applied theatre work offered individuals a different perspective on their own real world stories, indicating the capacity for the body to capture and respond to cognitive processing. For some, the dramatisation of elements of theirs or others' stories, was the most illuminating aspect of the work. P:A in particular spoke frequently about her need for physical connection with the words and that the drama was really thought in corporeal form.

> *"I love dramatising."* (P:A, VS3)
>
> *"I enjoyed it. I really enjoyed it! I get most out of this when it's drama.*" (P:A, VS8)

P:C and P:D also found the opportunities for physical movement and dramatisation extremely beneficial as a way of bringing to life opportunities to change the action in the here and now through engaging in stop moments (Appelbaum, 1995; Fels, 2012, 2015). These enabled the participants as actors in their own stories to poise on the brink of action and analyse a moment reflexively.

> *"One of the huge differences last night was the chance to do the dramatisations and the enactment of it…it's interesting to play a different way of thinking. Because then, if you enact that, it will change the dynamic of the situation that you're in…that's where I think the drama spect-acting thing was really….was fantastic."* (P:C, PSRI)

> *"I think what you* [P:C] *were saying about enacting things, I think that kept it for quite a long time, fresh in your mind, what you've done……days and days later I was remembering you know? So it's affecting you in that way because you were still remembering some of the* [situations]." (P:D, EI)

P:B's response to the dramatisation appears contradictory at times evidencing the conflict she experienced between finding the theatre techniques both useful and uncomfortable to work with. During VS8, P:B stated:

> *"I enjoy watching the other dramas but I don't particularly enjoy doing it, it's never going to be a comfortable thing for me.....but I knew that before I came and that's partly why I do it."*(P:B, VS8)

The concept of watching and observing ran through a lot of P:B's interaction in the physical processes.

> *"I prefer language to the drama part of it…..I think the drama is really helpful, but for me I think the individual talking through how they* [think] *is really interesting, to understand a bit more about how the different people actually think."* (P:B, PSRI)

However, P:B also identified the benefit of being involved in the physical exploration and interpretation of a participant's story during VS8 when reflecting on using Image Theatre to explore character:

> *"I think doing it…when I put the beast over there…it became clearer to me as we were doing it because the rest of us just got on with what we were doing, just be relaxed, be happy just doing what we wanted to."* (P:B, VS8)

And during the group evaluation interview a year following on from the 6PSM sessions, P:B appeared to recall a more positive response to engaging in the physical experience of enactment, not just from the perspective of enjoying the experience but of seeing a very different way to cognitively process experiences:

> *"We don't tend to think things physically although we talked about body language which is about physicality but when we were actually enacting it, weren't we, you know? So we're thinking 'do you go close here, or stand over there? Do we move here?' So I think the enactment part of it was another level that I found I enjoyed more than I thought I would."* (P:B, EI)

All of the participants involved in Stage 2, a year following the 6PSM sessions, indicated that one of the most significant sessions for them in terms of their learning, occurred in VS8. During this session the group physically processed the only anonymously told story. P:A's story was used for this Session (Appendix N.5) and two dramatic conventions were used to explore elements of the story; Image Theatre and tableaux into action (Appendix R for explanation).

Physically positioning the elements from P:A's story and then working these physical images from the abstract into a contemporary and more real world context, created considerable reflexive dialogue within the session, and during the reflection time at the end of the session. Considering embodied reflexivity as an emotional mind-body connection (Cunliffe, 2004; Finlay, 2005, 2006, 2014; Leigh & Bailey, 2013), feedback from P:A as creator of the story given during the reflective element at the end of the session with the group, would indicate a very strong and real sense of realisation through this process:

> *"What I found particularly interesting tonight is taking a character and putting it into a completely different context and trying to make a link back to the* [original] *story, I found that incredibly useful…….I had a very clear image in my head about this character 'what if, what if' and it completely altered and it makes you wonder how <u>do</u> you come over to other people? You know? Your way of thinking is not the same as*

> *other people's way of thinking and that can be quite alarming sometimes when you feel that people are not thinking the way I'm thinking, why are they not thinking the same way?"*(P:A, VS8)

Seeing the characters created in different physical poses had an impact on P:A in relation to her story. Having used her story again in another context, she noted in her reflective interview that the participants she worked with chose to view the helpful force and hindering force differently to her and portrayed them physically in a different way. She explained:

> *"I think the main thing for me over the whole experience was when we swapped from the abstract to the real. And I actually, genuinely felt annoyed, you know? I genuinely felt annoyed and that surprised me……And I think the other thing that came out for me is the kind of realisation that people don't automatically tune into what you're thinking and why you're thinking it particularly…..that's just the way of it. So that came out really strongly for me. And in actual fact, I have used that story since…Because it kind of made me think, 'wait a minute, I've always thought the light [the third element, the helpful force] was the ally, clearly the ally', and now I'm beginning to wonder. I'm beginning to think 'wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.' And it's when I saw that pose, I actually did see the beast as an oppressed thing and the light looked like the sort of deity, you know? It was just, really like a strange moment because it….it did resonate with me, you know?"* (P:A, Post APSRI)

4.3.1.1 Summary

The findings from the data appear to suggest that the use of physical drama and theatre techniques was an important part of the reflective process for the participants. Engaging reflectively through directly enacting or witnessing the enactment of elements of their stories offered participants experiential knowledge creation and changing opportunities through embodying their own and others' characters (Mezirow, 1991; Varela et al., 1993).

During the evaluation interview a year after the 6PSM sessions had concluded, three of the participants explored embodiment further to consider

the impact of the use of dramatisation on their longer term reflective processes. P:B indicated that the physicality of the process enabled her to think in a different way about her situation and offered her at the time, a different way of processing her story. P:C indicated that the act of embodying characters during the sessions enabled him to rehearse for real life:

> *"some of the things I actually got from it was a skills rehearsal, narratives, seeing things from different perspectives, getting some of the feedback from trying to tell my story…….it did help me kind of order my thoughts, see things clearer……..it gave me different strategies as well which did prove to be useful to actually implement in meetings."* (P:C, EI)

The role of listener seemed to enable participants to also gain new knowledge about their own experiences from the experiences of others and make connections which they carried through to their own future actions (Gersie & King, 1990; Simmons, 2006a). Physically embodying elements of the story offered not just a very real and felt experience of contextualised learning, but also appeared to enable participants to view each others' stories from the inside, as character or witness to character.

In addition, the learning and insight gained appeared to be formed through connection with the others in the group and could therefore be argued to as a result of the connectivity between teller(s) and listener(s); a performative and embodied process that offered creative space to play with narrative (Fels, 2009a, 2012; Ramsey, 2005). As the participants' stories emerged, opportunities for multiple and joined narratives were created, enabling the teller to use the experiences and knowledge of the listeners to expand upon and develop new learning (Gentner, 2010; Kurtz et al., 2001). In turn, it appeared at points in the sessions highlighted in the findings above, that those listening embodied elements of the heard story so that it became a lived and physical experience (Smears, 2009).

4.3.2 INSIGHT AND REFLEXIVITY

The findings from the sessions and subsequent interviews with the participants suggest that the work the group engaged in, enabled existing

knowledge and understanding about 'self' to be unearthed and new insight gained into individual's behaviours and actions (Dent-Brown & Wang, 2006). All participants suggest that the experience of creating and telling their stories, as well as listening to others, was thought provoking and at times, extremely challenging (Gersie, 1990; Gersie & King, 1997). Often it seemed that the concepts of change and choice-making appeared in the questioning of the tellers and also in the feedback that the teller gave to the group. At times, the choices made appeared unconscious or sub-conscious until the group began to evaluate their experiences as part of the session process. This is reflected in some of the statements made in relation to the participants' stories, for example:

> *"Why did the boat not just say no? I hadn't thought that the boat would say no but I think maybe the boat should have. Maybe it was just persuaded by the elephant that it 'will just change'."* (P:D, VS5)

A moment of insight for P:D came during the next session – VS6 – where she and the group had returned to her story. In VS6 she played out saying no to the hindering force in her story, the elephant. She said after the enactment:

> *"Maybe the boat* [the first element, the character card] *should have said 'I'll think about this and I'd like another meeting.' It wouldn't have changed the elephant's mind but it would perhaps have made the boat feel better about being a fish*[the fourth element, the action card]*, about being made to change……..It has been very helpful seeing this. I was the boat and I'm aware that I'm not good at standing up for myself…I'm very much at the mercy of people above me."* (P:D, VS6)

P:D later referred to this experience as being significant in her understanding of her behaviour in connection with her professional journey, for example in the choices she made about jobs to take or directions to work in. This unearthing of realisation about behaviour was also experienced by P:B when she responded to a story from an external to the group:

> *"there's a level of confusion about yourself, what you're meant to do, what can help or hinder you….but trying to understand the actual problem and how you are stuck [is hard]….which is very real isn't it?*

> *Because actually when you're in the situation you often can't see the deer for the cage!"*(P:B, VS3)

Transitioning moments of learning about one's own behaviour appeared in many of the videoed sessions and the interviews carried out after stories were told. P:B for example, explored her own tendency to lose focus and attention during discussions, recognising the danger of missed opportunities for her:

> *"I don't have patience……I have a very short attention span…..*[so the story] *was a big story, very boring but it made me think about this in leadership. I need to think and listen to the whole story. I think I can second guess about 80% of the time but I'm now sure it's much less."* (P:B, VS3)

For P:A, there were two apparent moments of significant insight obvious in her engagement with the process. Both of these suggest reflexive and embodied moments of learning that shifted something in P:A's self-knowledge, causing an element of discomfort (Cunliffe, 2004; Smears, 2009; Stuart, 2001). In her first story telling session, P:A told the story of Libra, a feather (the first element, the character card) moved across the world by a helpful and creative inner force (the third element, the helpful force card) which she likened to a wind. When asked if Libra generated the helpful force or if it was already there, P:A replied that she hadn't thought about that, stating:

> *"the wind, was it random or did Libra control it, or was it there anyway. That's made me think quite a bit."* (P:A, VS4)

During the post-session reflective interview P:A elaborated on a sense of unease created by that question:

> *"it was the comments afterwards that really made me think. And I think I said to you at the time that that comment was the one that really made me stop and think…..it seemed like a discordant note to me, I didn't fit in….it wasn't part of my script. It wasn't part of my thought"* (P:A, PSRI)

And later;

> *"And I thought to myself, 'where the hell did* [this] *come from?' And then it kind of got me onto a train of thinking about instinct……and about making it up as you go along as a leader. So in other words, it's like I'm not following any kind of script."* (P:A, PSRI)

For P:A, the question seemed to prompt her to view herself from a different perspective and her anxiety about her own professional capabilities became entangled in the story she created. Engaging in reflexive dialogue during the session with her fellow participants, and reflective dialogue after the session enabled her to move through the murky waters of tacit knowledge and begin to create explicit sense from these experiences (Cunliffe, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Polyani, 1966).

P:A's second significant moment of insight came during VS8. During this session, her story was read out anonymously by me (Appendix N.5) and the group worked through elements of the story using Image Theatre techniques (Appendix R). A number of contradictions came to light for all of the participants in the story and P:A raised this herself, when she asked:

> *"why has* [the fourth element, the hindering force card] *gone from an object to a beast? A beast conjures up a strong image. The force* [the first element, the character card] *is giving it an almost personality."* (P:A, VS8)

Each participant's sculpted image of the two opposing elements – the Force and the Beast – offered a different perspective into the relationship between these two elements. However, the process of translating the abstract sculpted images of Force and Beast into a more real-world context – that of characters in a coffee shop – enabled P:A to position her story in a contemporary context, still 'safe' in the fictionalised storyworld of make-believe (Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990; Herman, 2009; Pässilä et al., 2015; Pendzik, 2003, 2011). From this, she and her fellow participants explored an embodied self-reflexive process, having to challenge their own and each other's assumptions about individual intent, perceived need and

their self-storying. This appeared evident to some extent in their character's internal monologues, voiced as part of the session; for example:

> *"It's getting overwhelming and too much. She's getting anxious and I just jumped in to take her away from the situation. Feeling a bit claustrophobic."* (P:B, VS8)

> *"feeling helpless and hopeless and a bit angry. Why don't you want to be together?"* (P:C, VS8)

P:B, P:C and P:D all wanted to help P:A's character in some way but their definitions of 'help' were based on their own assumptions about P:A's needs. During the reflective dialogue at the end of the session, the group spoke animatedly about the learning from this embodied process, evidencing new insights into their own behaviours, for example:

> *"It felt really uncomfortable and it was completely different to how I'd seen it in my head….In [my head] I'd felt more in control but when it was translated into real life I felt totally out of control."* (P:A, VS8)

> *"I particularly liked the bit where you* [pointing to P:A] *were standing more positively……..so I go to meetings and often disagree with people and I try my absolute best to go in sometimes thinking positively and you know, it doesn't always go well……but seeing how just the difference of putting a more positive slant on something can make to the situation and how everyone's feeling…..that's something I'm going to take away."* (P:D, VS8)

In VS8, the discussion about the Beast in the story became a focal point for reflective dialogue and insights about real-world 'beasts' encountered by the participants in their professional roles, and further insight into their ability to act on choice was evident. For P:C and P:B, there were significant learning moments which, as will be argued later in this chapter, were apparently transformational for them, to do with choice and action. The following was extracted from part of their discussion:

> P:B "*Somebody I really respect, and I thought about them [during our work] tonight. I suppose I thought they were quite weak. I*

thought, what's happened? They've lost it…..I was worried thinking is it a lack of confidence? But no, I got it wrong. They're really happy just not worrying about these beasts……just do what you do and don't care about the beasts."

Researcher "*That can be a very difficult place to get to."*

P:B "*Well I misunderstood it until tonight. That's not a bad place to be. It's maybe about having the wisdom, you know we're not going to change our management structure or individuals that we don't like…..don't let it worry you."*

P:C "*There's still a bit of me that gets really angry though…."*

P:B "*I know, but that's my issue. Because this person knows that in this situation at this time they're in it will never manifest itself……."*

P:C "*I find that incredibly powerful."*

P:B "*I don't know how much they're aware of it but it was this work we did tonight that made me think it."* (VS8)

The findings suggest that insights for the individuals within the group appeared to come at different points in the process, often through the reflexive dialogue occurring between the individuals as actors embodying characters within their stories (Boal, 1995; Landy, 1993, 2001), and through critical reflective dialogue after the sessions in which individuals processed learning moments with each other. These learning moments were not always comfortable as P:A acknowledged in her post-story reflective interview, and this highlighted a very important aspect of self-development through this process linked to the concept of discomfort and transformation. Wolgemuth and Donohue (2006) argue for a mode of inquiry into learning drawing in part from the concept suggested by Boler (1999) in order to create an approach to active interviewing that links researcher and participant in the unearthing and uprooting of deeply held assumptions and entrenched positions enabling new insight and learning to occur. Within the group, it

seemed that these moments of discomfort were shared by them as participants and researchers in their own knowledge creation process.

Although uncomfortable, P:A acknowledged that the learning was useful and created waves of new thinking for her (P:A, PSRI). This view was shared by the other participants relating their own experiences of facing discomfort in the process. The act of reflexing (reflecting in the moment) and reflecting after the moment provided opportunities for the individual's narrative to be reshaped and reformed through the telling and re-telling of the story created. Bringing this knowledge back into the group at subsequent points in the sessions' process offered the chance for further learning to be gained which then sometimes identified further areas of discomfort or an apparent reluctance of some to accept the results of the reflective process. P:B in particular, appeared to have a dichotomous relationship with the concept of reflection; on the one hand she viewed the concept with scepticism and stated:

> *"I am quite sceptical about the notion of reflection generally, and I think a lot of it is very common sense stuff that we try to theorise and don't do particularly well."* (P:B, EI)

She directly followed that statement with:

> *"I found the opportunity to talk with people who had different perspectives the valuable thing for me."* (P:B, EI)

A moment of insight referred to earlier in this chapter (p.126) was related to P:B's story during Session 6. In her story, the third element (the hindering force card) was an image of a skull (Appendix H) and for P:B this represented her mindset:

> *"The skull is my perception...being stuck or dead in my thinking, being rigid and unable to move. As opposed to a face which is soft tissue and can move, a skull is fixed.....and that's my threat, it's around my own fixed, rigid view."* (P:B, VS6)

During the first telling of the story, P:B's narrative became an embodied and reflexive process with the content of the story emerging through the cards

she had been given; the process was ‘in the moment’ rather than ‘about or after the moment’. She was unearthing knowledge about her capacity for change (Dent-Brown & Wang, 2006) as her thoughts were reshuffled and connected (Smears, 2009). During the observation and commentary process after the story telling, it was clear that other participants had different views of the same image. For example, P:C’s interpretation of the skull image was:

> *“It’s quite stark though. It worries me. The skull worries me because it’s a frightening thing it’s quite scary. I worry for the person who is the skull.”* (P:C, VS6)

P:D also offered a view of the skull image:

> *“I saw the skull as protection because it’s inside and protecting from something else.”* (P:D, VS6)

The responses to this one situation created interesting moments of discomfort for P:B. During the session, her response indicated an appreciation of the varying view points:

> *“it’s been helpful to talk through. I think* [P:C’s] *strong reaction to the skull was interesting. I think he worried for me as a friend which was nice but his reaction forced me to articulate this more clearly…..*[P:D’s] *thought about being protective has been really helpful, that I need to protect my brain better against this.”* (P:B, VS6)

The sense of appreciation also featured during her post story reflection interview where she indicated that the process enabled her to work through a situation she was having at the time and be offered different viewpoints:

> *“I think it was helpful at the time….I brought up this situation that was live at the time. It doesn’t resonate so strongly now because things have kind of moved on quite a bit. At the time, I think it was helpful to talk it through….It makes you see things from different perspectives.”* (P:B, PSRI)

However, she also spoke at some length about the observations of the participant who had a negative reaction to the skull card and this appears to offer a contradiction to her previous statements, as she said:

> *"What I didn't necessarily find helpful was when you're telling the story, other people interpreting it for you."* (P:B, PSRI)

And:

> *"I think you can get put off when there's other people putting their interpretations. So for me, I think you almost have to just let the people see it the way they want to see it….it's not your story. It doesn't matter what you feel. This is about me in my situation."* (P:B, PSRI)

She then adds:

> *"I think, oh god, next time I'll do it, I'll never be a skull again because people will get upset if you put yourself in the skull."* (P:B, PSRI)

This suggests a discomfort arising from the challenge to her perception of this element of the story and also that the discomfort comes from the participants associating her in her 'totality' as a reflection of the popular symbolism of a skull (as she said*: "I'm not thinking I'm going to die or I'm a skull"* (P:B, PSRI). As the interview continued, a process of dialogical 'reflex-ing' was evident, with P:C working through, rationalising and then emotionally connecting with her experiences of the story process (Cunliffe, 2002, 2004; Finlay 2005, 2006).

> P:B: "*It was nothing. It was a card, it could've been any card …..I think for me, we shouldn't…you know, the cards we need to be mindful how they…You know, I won't tell him the story again. I think it would make me…just put a lighter touch. And if I had a card that I felt someone in the group might think is a death card or something terrible, I wouldn't go there…."*
>
> Researcher "*How would that help you?"*
>
> P:B "*I don't know. That, to me, was a block, because I was interested in telling the story. And there was* [sic] *some helpful things about that situation, it did sort of raise stuff. But the thing I took away from it was bloody hell, it was just a card!" (*P:B, PSRI)

P:B's pressing concern was that she did not want people to see her as the skull in a negative way and she acknowledged through this dialogic process that her reaction was to defend:

> *"I became quite defensive that I was, you know, seen as somebody who saw themselves as a skull and clearly I don't…it was just a card."* (P:B, PSRI)

Although it is clear from a number of her own statements during VS6 and the PSRI that followed, that she gained from the experience of sharing the story, there remains a lack of clarity about the impact of the negative responses to this one aspect of her story – the skull image – on her overall learning from the process.

4.3.2.1 Summary

The findings from the data collected suggest that there were very real and clear moments of insight for all of the participants in the process. These moments of insight correlate with Cunliffe's (2004) view of connections that are made through embodied and reflexive points of significance, or 'struck' moments (Corlett, 2012; Cunliffe, 2004). At these points, there is an impetus to reflect in order to understand. For example, in the case of P:B and the reaction of others to one of the cards in her story, this 'struck' moment created a space for her to reflex; a cognitive and embodied reaction which suggested that there was an emerging change process occurring. In addition, these moments of clarity for the participants appeared to have happened through socially constructed experiences, drawing on the knowledge, understanding and willingness to listen of the others in the group (Boud, 2010; Corlett, 2012; Ramsey, 2005; Rowe, 2008). This supports the view that real reflexive learning does not occur in a vacuum but instead is a process of unpacking tacit knowledge through the connections made with others (Cunliffe, 2004; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004; Polyani, 1966).

What also emerged from the findings is the suggestion that this way of interpreting the self as a shared process, where the narratives of the self are co-constructed through the connections with others (Boje, 2001; Boje et al., 2015; Cunliffe, 2001, 2002, 2004), at times created periods of reflective and reflexive discomfort for the participants. Opening the self up to scrutiny

creates potential vulnerability in those involved in the process; a sense that one might be discovered, 'found out' (Stuart, 2001). P:A's struggled at points during the dramatising of elements of her anonymous story and this appeared to lead to a physical and embodied reaction, shutting down her thinking and forcing her to be aware of her responses (Fels, 2990a, 2012).

These moments became opportunities for the development of insights – 'thought-full' experiences which are captured cognitively and affectively – rather than merely interesting or curious incidents. What makes these apparently insightful moments significant is the embodied connection the participants had with the experience of noticing (Corlett, 2012; Fels, 2012; Fook, 2010; Smears, 2009).

4.4 ENHANCING PRACTICE: RESULTS

4.4.1 TRANSFORMATIONAL MOMENTS

A final theme emerging from the data gathered is related to the idea of transformational moments of change or learning as defined by Mezirow (1991; Mezirow & Associates, 1990, 2000); moments requiring higher order processing to create lasting change. There were many insightful moments evident in analysis of the data. These moments can be defined as pivotal points, or 'stops' (Appelbaum, 1995; Fels, 2009a, 2012, 2015) in which the individual is present in the moment and is able to create a pause in the process, offering them time to think, feel and adapt their actions to effect change (Finlay 2005, 2006).

However, the data also suggest that there were a number of significant 'aha' moments; emerging from tacit, intuitive or instinctive embodied feelings (Cunliffe, 2002) into a conscious and explicit statement of belief, and which then led to some degree of longer term change in relation to practice. These moments are defined as transformational. The degree of longer term change was indicated by the content of reflective dialogue throughout the period of the active sessions during the research data collection period (for example, the referencing back to the moment of transformative learning during the group sessions and the post story reflection interviews); and also the content of reflective dialogue captured a year after the 6PSM sessions had ended

during Stage 2, where it is argued the transformational moments were referred to as actively used in practice.

It is useful to note at this point that an interesting finding from the suggest that a number of participants gained transformational moments of learning from each other's stories, correlating with the argument that knowledge is built through a socially constructed process of interconnected narratives (Boje, 2001, 2006; Fook, 2010; Noble, 2001; Smears, 2009). Two of P:D's transformational moments were found as she connected her own reflexive processes with the stories of others long after the 6PSM sessions were concluded. For example, she stated:

> *"..an individual 'aha' moment for me was obviously the one about the monster in the corner, and that was connected to my cat story…..because that was a particular story of mine, it's something that had happened in my work and I was thinking I may as well just leave. And it was a person, a person, but she wasn't bothering me so just stay out of the way* [sic]*….that was one of those moments for me when I just thought 'just leave it alone.'"* (P:D, EI)

And,

> *"Another moment for me was when* [P:C] *was trying to move the mountain, why bother? It's not as if you can't change anything, just sort of live with it. But if it doesn't have to be moved, you can find other ways around it…and that related to me when I thought about things that were happening at work. Do I really need them changed the way I need them changed or can I compromise? Maybe I haven't listened to people and taken on board their points of view."* (P:D, EI)

Critically reflecting on the way in which her actions impacted others was a theme carrying through P:D's engagement with the work. During the dramatising of elements of VS8, P:D was struck (Corlett, 2012; Cunliffe, 2004) by the value of being mindful of her own behaviours with others and this was a thread running through her commentary in both the sessions and the interviews afterwards. During VS8 she said:

> *"So I go to meetings and often disagree with people and I try my absolute best to go in sometimes thinking positively and you know it doesn't go well…It's something I always try to do but it doesn't always work. So seeing how just the difference of putting a more positive slant on something can make to the situation* [sic]….*that's something I am going to take away."* (P:D, VS8)

So significant was the reflexive experience for her during the group that P:D's own professional development and interests became a focus for her and the impact of her story ultimately led her to apply for and successfully obtain a number of promoted positions culminating with her achieving her ambition of becoming a Head Teacher. She reflected this goal in her post story reflection, in which the character card (the boat) represented P:D, and the helpful force was an image of an elephant, representing her line manager, the Head Teacher of her school, at the time:

P:D *"I still think that the elephant has been very helpful really in moving the boat….because I think you can get stuck in a rut and be in one place. So I think where the* [end of the story] *is just now the change in perspective would be that I would just end being the boat and perhaps try to be the elephant."*

Researcher *"So actually change the focus….would the task* [the second element, the task card] *still be to grow, to be different but in a very different direction?"*

P:D *"Yes, I think that the task would be to be the wise elephant now…"* (P:D, PSRI)

The process of telling and critically reflecting on his story in VS4, led to P:C's first suggested transformational moment. This moment was identified by me during the data analysis but also by P:C himself in Stage 2 a year following the end of the 6PSM sessions.

In VS4, P:C told his story which was about a mountain whose task it was to move across *"an angry sea"* (P:C, VS4). During the observation and

commentary element of VS4, questions were asked about why the mountain had to move. P:C rationalised the task of moving the mountain:

> *"It's all part of the journey……"*
>
> *"…it can take what it's good at and give it to someone else in another place……."*
>
> *"….it wants to meet other mountains, it doesn't want to be alone."* (P:C, VS4)

During this part of the process, P:C began to question the mountain's rationale too, asking:

> *"*[it was] *solid and reliable, couldn't move. Fixed. Why couldn't it move?"* (P:C, VS4)

And again, in response to P:A's *comment "mountains aren't supposed to move, it's not supposed to. So why would it?"* (P:A, VS4), P:C responded:

> *"Should this mountain change and if so, what should it change?"* (P:C, VS4)

P:C's reflection at the end of the session focused on the impact that was beginning to surface for him, of the question about the purpose of the mountain's journey. As has been seen earlier in this chapter (p.141). P:C's interpretation of the character in his story's behaviour and actions was something that stuck with him throughout the subsequent session, where he commented on the learning for him as being "profound" and "jaw dropping" (P:C, VS5). This suggests a learning experience that moves beyond insight and into a transformation moment where connections with a deeper level of internal cognitive and affective processing has led to significant change (Mezirow, 1991)

This transformational moment also formed part of P:C's reflective dialogue in his post story interview where he explained the impact of the 'aha' moment (Cunliffe, 2004):

> *"I suppose what I've done is I've been stuck in a cycle really and re-running the thing, so it really did break that cycle…..I think what it did*

> *for me, what I've got from it, is that it doesn't need to be like that. I can control that."* (P:C, PSRI)

In the evaluation interview a year later, P:C returned to this moment of transformational learning for him, stating:

> *"I think it was absolutely transformational, it just made me think….because the mountain represented a barrier, something like a problem……and somebody said 'do you have to move it?', you know, or 'are you the only person who can shift this mountain?'…..people gave me a completely different way of looking at it than I actually thought….so that was quite an 'aha!' moment for me."* (P:C, EI)

Interesting to note in P:C's recollection of the story after a year, is the subtle change of the mountain's impact; from being a solid and reliable force, to being a barrier and something of a problem. During the discussion in the research process, P:C acknowledged that he pictured himself as the mountain and reflected afterwards that his own thought process often inhibited his way of coping with the professional challenged he faced:

> *"I think that's part of the problem with me….that I know myself. And the process of doing this in the group has made me see that I don't cope with uncertainty and I don't cope with not being sure. And rather than fall back on my own resilience and strengths, I know there are times when I have quite literally fallen to bits, you know?"* (P:C, PSRI)

His final comment on his story during the evaluation session was about understanding that he had choices and options, and that he was responsible for which way he went:

> *"The mountain was massively transformational for me because it made me think well I've been getting this completely wrong. I'm not able to do anything about this mountain. Therefore I either accept this here or accept a way of living with that horizon and my landscape."* (P:C, EI)

Rather than the superficiality of reflection referred to by Kemp (2001) as the 'confessional narrative', P:C's experience of developing self-knowledge

appeared to have been embodied and reflexive, creating a transformational shift in perspective and challenging his assumptions about 'self' (Finlay, 2014; Fook, 2010; Fook & Gardner, 2007).

The findings suggest that a second moment of transformational learning occurred for P:C during VS8; a session that also offered transformational moments of practice for some of the other participants. In this session P:B had created an image of part of the story which involved two central characters; the 'force' and the 'beast'. P:B's image reflected a physical and emotional distance between the 'beast' and the rest of the actors/participants in the image and she explained her rationale for this:

> *"At the moment, we're in control. The beast will only be aroused if we chuck something at her or shout or move into her space. We could choose to look at it, move over but basically it's up to us."* (P:B, VS8)

As the session developed, P:B returned to the idea of the 'beast', re-contextualising it within a different situation and storyline and indicating that she was intuitively making connections between the significant learning from the previous context (Taylor, Fisher & Dufresne, 2002):

> *"For me it's about the beast and why would you approach it? My inclination is to walk away whereas some people like to chase it. The characters are wanting*[sic] *to seek it and tease it or appease it. There are others of us who are thinking let's just leave it."* (P:B, VS8)

This resonated with P:C who returned to the concept of the beast Stage 2 a year following the cessation of the 6PSM sessions. He said of the experience:

> *"I actually think it was a massively pivotal bit…and there was a kind of almost revelationary* [sic] *'road to Damascus' transformation …"* (P:C, EI)

He added:

> *"I was at a meeting and I was thinking about this…because I go into this meeting with fear and trepidation and because of part of what we did* [in the sessions] *I came at it in a different way and the meeting*

> *was completely different for me, when I came out of it. And I think that's down to thinking about moving on, getting beyond that blockage with us as a group."* (P:C, EI)

For P:B, the type of epistemological shift described by the others in the group was not experienced. Instead, P:B referred to 'minor aha!' moments in which she stated that insights were evident and existing knowledge was brought to the forefront of consciousness, one of these being the same 'monster in the corner' experience referred to by the others in the group. In the evaluation interview with the group a year after the 6PSM sessions were completed, P:B reflected on the significance of that particular focus of learning:

> *"I don't think I transformed or anything like that, but there was certainly…..I think the bit about kicking the monster….basically, if there's big problems don't make them worse….you don't go with dinosaurs and wake them up just for the sake of it, let them sleep, keep out of their road so to speak."* (P:B, EI)

Later in the session she stated:

> *"…it was the helpful moments…..minor, yes minor 'aha!' moments. And I think there was quite a lot of those moments altogether and that's helpful…."* (P:B, EI)

This concept of 'minor' moments of transformational learning connects with Cunliffe's (2004) and Corlett's (2012) view that instinctive and intuitive 'aha' moments come and go and are not always captured. During VS8, P:B's response to the story context appeared to indicate that she had a much deeper reflexive connection than temporal distance enabled her to recall. She stated during the reflective element of VS8:

> *"I think doing it....when I put the beast over there..... it became clearer to me as we were doing it, because the rest of us just got on with what we were doing. Just being relaxed, being happy, just doing what we wanted to do. And it was quite helpful and it made me think actually that's just up to me, I don't have to.....because sometimes I think I have to chase the beast, I have to please or appease it, you know, keep always stroking it to keep it calm and actually do you know*

> *something, it doesn't really matter. It's over there* [pointing behind her]...*and if I want to go poking at the beast or chucking things at it then yeah it will get annoyed.....but in fact you can just ignore it most of the time.*" (P:B, VS8)

The discussion about the beast in P:A's fictional story led P:B on a journey through experiences current for her in her professional life. Again, here minor 'aha' moments appeared to be evident in her responses to discussions, for example:

> *"…..certainly where I work the beasts look at us who are the 'force' and attribute troublemaker to this or that…do the job, do the best you can, just get on with it and not* [sic] *look for anything anymore from these beasts. Just do what you do and don't care about the beasts….I misunderstood that until just tonight."* (P:B, VS8)

And,

> *"I don't know how much they're aware of it but it was this work we did tonight that made me think it."* (P:B, VS8)

Unfortunately before the evaluation interview with the group a year after the 6SPM sessions had ended, P:A had changed jobs and despite attempts to locate her, she was not contactable. It is therefore difficult to say if there have been any long lasting, transformational experiences from the work done in the group. However, during the sessions, there were two moments already referred to earlier in this section that could be suggested to be classified as the type of 'minor aha' moment P:B referred to. Both of these moments were related to the stories that P:A created or told and in both cases, the observation and commentary process that the group engaged with created moments of uncertainty and challenge; for example:

> *"it was the comments afterwards that really made me think. And I think I said to you at the time that that comment was the one that really made me stop and think…..it seemed like a discordant note to me, I didn't fit in….it wasn't part of my script. It wasn't part of my thought"* (P:A, PSRI)

And, later in relation to the anonymous story she told:

> *"It felt really uncomfortable and it was completely different to how I'd seen it in my head….In* [my head] *I'd felt more in control but when it was translated into real life I felt totally out of control."* (P:A, VS8)

In these moments, the balance between form and feeling (Johnson, 2011) appeared to be crucial for P:A and the anonymity of the second story used in VS8 seemed to enable her to feel as though she could create an aesthetic distance between her and the story and also that those listening and sharing would have freedom to comment in a way that would be more useful:

> *"I think it was better as anonymous because I think people do attribute qualities and have an opinion about you as a person. And I think if they know the story's yours, they're already making assumptions before they even hear the story…..whereas when the story's anonymous, nobody really know* [sic] *who it is or where the story is coming from or what it's about. So I think you get a far more honest response. And that was quite useful. I thought that was quite useful. And I could step back from it too. It became someone else's story if you know what I mean?"* (P:A, APSRI)

Although long term impact is not possible to judge for P:A, her comments in VS8 (the last session she attended) and her post story reflection interview as a result of the anonymous story told in that session, suggest that the insights gained were not merely transitional but had potential for longer lasting relevance:

> *"I think the real thing for me tonight was the translation from character in story to real life. It's really made me think about other people's perceptions, how people see you, what you think of other people, assumptions you make about how they are thinking and feeling."* (P:A, VS8)

And,

> *"I think* [if Libra took on everyone's issues] *that the burden would become too much for Libra. How many faces can Libra actually*

produce? I mean, how many sides has Libra got, you know, how many ways do you re-invent yourself?...It's not good, because it makes you lose your sort of feeling of the inspirational...but there is something there, you know, about investing everything into something that you are passionate about....something more for me to think about." (P:A, PSRI)

4.4.1.1 Summary

Transformational moments of development appeared to be evident in the findings. These moments were identified by, and specific to, the individual participant, not measured against norm criteria but rather against self expectation. The process of collectively sharing an individual's story appeared to move the knowledge creation process from the one to the many (Boal, 1979; 1995; Gersie, 1990; Gersie & King, 1997) and allowed for the development of an embodied self-awareness (Cunliffe, 2002; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004; Leigh & Bailey, 2013; Smears, 2009) to emerge through the process of engaging with struck moments (Corlett, 2001; Cunliffe, 2004).

What moved these moments from being insightful to being transformational was the impact of change that was maintained over a longer period of time (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow & Associates, 1990, 2000); in the case of this research study, the fact that learning appeared to be maintained over a year after the 6PSM sessions had finished. As can be seen from three of the four participants, there was a sense of transformational change (referred to in the findings as 'aha' moments) at varying degrees, connected to the work carried out during the sessions. These 'aha' moments created what could be termed as echoes for individuals that continued to evolve and change as their life experiences evolved and changed. For example, for P:C and P:D, their moments of transformation during the sessions that their stories were told in, resonated and developed as the sessions themselves progressed. Translating tacit knowledge into explicit understanding as they experienced these transformational moments as part of a group enabled P:C and P:D's learning to become part of a collective process rather than an individually held narrative (Boje, 2001, 2006; Gersie & King, 1997; Simmons, 2006a). From their experiences during the sessions, both P:C and P:D

seemed to make considerable shifts in their professional practice; for P:C there was a change in approach and attitude towards challenging situations which enabled him to develop greater insight into his interactions with others. For P:D, arguably the most significant demonstrable shift could be seen in her change of job and achievement of a professional life goal.

For P:B, the sense of realisation about her actions in connection with the 'monsters' in her organisation, became a minor 'aha' moment which stayed with her to some extent and surfaced during the evaluation interview a year after the 6PSM sessions had ended. For P:A, while the findings were not able to evidence long term impact from the work, they did indicate increased self-awareness, particularly in relation to her perception of self as part of the group and also her explicit awareness of the difference in perspective that can occur within a group, between individuals.

For all participants, the findings suggest that the experience of engaging with the 6PSM process enabled them to explore their individual stories and collective narratives as embodied learning (Corlett, 2012; Leigh & Bailey, 2013; Smears 2009). Engagement with physical expression through Image Theatre (Boal, 1995; Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015) created opportunities for acting reflectively (on their actions) and reflexively (in their actions) to affect understanding and change. These moments of insight became opportunities for transformational learning that appeared to be taken by the participants as a way of professional self-development, and which moved them forwards in their understanding of self (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Linds, 2008).

4.5 EXPLORING PRACTICE: DISCUSSION

For the participants in this study, exploration of their practice began with the creating and telling of stories. The first stories in the group were collections of ante-narratives described by Allbon (2012) and Boje (2001, 2006); connected and yet nonlinear descriptions of their recent past and current situations shared as a means of communicating who they were and why they were in the group. These were not explorations of professional practice so much as a process that enabled them to find their place in the group and that flowed from the need that humans have to communicate their

ideas and to explain to the world who we are and how we connect with others (Abma, 2003; Cobley, 2014).

Stories appeared to therefore be a crucial part of the participants' ability to begin connections together. The real exploration of their professional practice began with their experiences of the 6PSM approach and their ability to connect this way of reflecting and 'reflexing' with their professional actions.

The findings suggested that all of the participants found and generated new learning opportunities as they worked through the 6PSM methodology. Their experience of the 6PSM as an activity itself appeared to show that the structure used provided a focus for the story creation process; that it was a way of holding the narratives contained within. This correlates with the original work of Lahad's (1992, 1993) in the development of the model, and with subsequent studies using 6PSM as a way of gathering individuals' stories, notably the work of Dent-Brown (for example, 1991, 2001a, 2009) and Dent-Brown and Wang (2004a, 2004b, 2006).

Interestingly, although the stories created and told all contained elements of a standard structure referred to by Herman (2009) and Ochs and Capps (2001), and also the six parts defined by the 6PSM itself, the linearity of the structure of 6PSM was an element of the process that was at times bent by the participants. At times, some of the participants moved around the structure in the process of the telling to enable them to explore their story – and therefore their practice – more effectively. Examples of that would be P:B's story about the girl in the cage (Appendix N.2), and also P:A's story about Libra (Appendix N.1), both of which evolved in the telling and sharing. This often happened as the other participants in the group offered insights and commentary which enabled the personal and professional narratives, bound up in fictionalised story 'containers', to accommodate new ideas or 'takes' on the action unfolding. By doing this, the original creator/teller was developing new knowledge about their situation as the learning was co-created and shared (Simmons, 2006a).

The structure of the process, and the use of the image cards (Appendix H), appeared at times to give the method a life of its own, a potential control over the direction and telling of the stories. P:C spoke about not wanting to

do a particular story and then moving with the process as he saw the cards unfold (p.124). P:A also stated that she ‘got the right cards’ for her story (p.124). For some of the participants, the structure and the cards became a way of de-constructing and rebuilding experiences, P:C referred to them as a ‘vehicle, a conduit’ to new learning. The creation of new knowledge was not always a comfortable experience; both P:A and P:B indicated moments of discomfort as their understanding of self and the perceptions of others were challenged. An important aspect of the facilitation of the sessions and the 6PSM process itself therefore related to trust building and finding a sense of connectedness that enabled the participants to feel safe in their story process, a comment that P:B made specifically during the evaluation session a year after the group work had finished.

Emotional connection with the stories also meant that there was an element of vulnerability for some of the participants, and words such as ‘exposed’/’exposure’ were used to describe the decision making process that participants went through to share their stories. This appears to support the work of a number of theorists who have linked trust and vulnerability to the opening up of ideas and personal experiences through storytelling (for example, Corlett, 2012; Gersie & King, 1997; Stuart, 2001). However, what was also clear in the findings, and that has been alluded to earlier in this section, was that the collective and communal nature of the process created offered a depth of shared experience that enabled the participants to work almost as a team through the different stories told. This correlates with a social constructionist paradigm, indicating that learning is relational and that our learning experiences are interconnected with those around us (Corlett, 2012) creating moments of trust and vulnerability that encourage a deeper and richer sharing of ideas (Gersie, 1990; Gersie & King, 1997; Rowe, 2000).

Exploration of professional practice was also developed through the physical connections the participants made with the stories created, told and heard as well as through the physicality of the use of dramatic techniques such as Image Theatre (Boal, 1995, 2003, 2006).As many theorists have attested to (for example, Cunliffe, 2002, 2004; Fels, 2009a, 2012, 2015; Kinsella, 2007; Leigh & Bailey, 2013; Rowe, 2008; Smears, 2009) reflexive practice is an embodied and lived experience. The experience of

transformative learning is felt by and in the body. All of the participants spoke of moments where the physical processes used in the sessions enabled them to gain a better understanding of their professional selves. In these moments, the participants were able to see themselves both as actors and characters within the stories told; engaging in a metaxic/reflexive (Boal, 1979,1995) relationship with each other and the 6PSM and thereby creating transformational learning possibilities (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow & Associates, 1990, 2000) where they could analyse and interpret their practice and look for ways to develop.

4.6 INTERPRETING PRACTICE: DISCUSSION

There appears to be a clear link identified in the findings between the use of the 6PSM and the process of engaging with critically reflexive experiences (Cunliffe, 2004; Cunliffe & Eastery-Smith, 2004; Fels, 2012, 2015; Stuart, 2001). The structure of the storytelling process used in 6PSM enabled the participants to analyse and interpret their realities through fictionalised or mythical storyworlds (Bettleheim, 1976; Franz, 1966; Herman, 2009), individually created but often co-authored through the process of collaborative and embodied storying (Gersie, 1990;Linds & Vettraino, 2008).

During their engagement with the activities in the sessions, and also during their processing of experiences as part of the post story reflections, the participants made several references to their learning, often speaking as character or through character, which reflects elements of the dramatherapeutic processes of projection and embodiment outlined by theorists such as Jones (1993, 2007) and Jennings (1998). For example, P:D had conversations with the group about the choices the elephant and the fish made in her story as though these were real individuals and not fantastical creations (Kearney, 2002; Geary, 2011). The development of real insights into practice then came from the ability to flex their thinking in the moment; the capacity to see around and beyond what is directly impacting on one's current experience (Steier, 1991) in order to create new pathways for learning.

Insights into practice therefore became physical sensations and experiences creating emotional and sometimes uncomfortable points of

transitioning. For example, P:B's reaction to the others' perception of the skull card she received (pp.152-154) and P:A's response to the source of the wind that blew the feather through her story (p.148) Interestingly, these moments of insight were given as self rather than as character or through character; in other words, participants spoke as themselves about the moments of transition in their learning about practice (for example, p.148). This suggests that the reflective experience is happening on at least two levels or in at least two places in the process. The first is during the experience where participants are reflexing (aware of in-the-moment shifts in their self knowledge, self awareness and/or self understanding). The second is after the experience where participants are critically reflecting (after-the-moment or on-the-moment awareness building).

There is a direct relationship here with the Boalian concept of metaxis; where the reality of the physical world is mapped against the individual's inner or alternative world enabling the participant to be cognisant of themselves as both 'actor' and 'character' (Boal, 1995; Forgasz, 2014; Pässilä et al., 2015). This form of reflexive and critical reflective experience also resonates with Mezirow's (1991, and Mezirow & Associates, 1990, 2000) understanding that transitioning into transformational learning experiences is developed through higher order cognitive processing, requiring deeper insights being formed which connect with the aesthetic understanding of the individual or group involved (Sutherland, 2012).

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the findings relating to the individuals' interpretation of their practice through the 6PSM is that the collective experience offered deeper insight into their practice than individual reflection might. All participants, at various points during the 6PSM sessions, and the three participants who attended the evaluation interview a year after the 6PSM sessions had ended, noted that they had moments of insight developed as a direct result of being part of the group. P:B stated that the sharing of thoughts and perspectives from others in the group had a direct impact on her unearthing new learning about her own practice. This view was echoed by the others suggesting that the knowledge built was indeed socially constructed with the individuals within the group being influenced and impacted by a lived, social experience that extended existing knowledge and

created pockets of new knowledge borne out of connectivity and relational constructs (Fook, 2002, 2010; Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

Cycling back to comfort and discomfort, the trust and vulnerability that appeared to be evident and also vital to process during the complex early stages of grounding the group in the structure of the 6PSM and the development of their own identities within the group, became an important part of their transitioning into moments of new learning. Interpreting their practice through honest and open dialogue about the stories told appeared to create leaps into challenging dialogue, as can be seen by P:B's reaction to the perspectives of others in the group in her story (p.153). The journey to new knowledge was through reflexive processes that challenged individual's assumptions about their own practice and offered opportunities to deconstruct their existing knowledge about the way in which they interact with the world (Cunliffe & Jun, 2005; Gabriel & Connell, 2010; Finlay, 2006). A significant benefit of the 6PSM as part of this process appeared to be the ability to create aesthetic distancing, in the creation, telling and sharing of the stories. Insights were still built and practice was still interrogated but through a fictional lens, one step removed. This links with the dramatherapeutic concept of aesthetic distancing as being the balance between form – the expression of self – and feeling – the linking of personal experiences into the form (Johnson, 2011). Again, the Boalian concept of metaxis introduced to the group and also discussed earlier in this section seemed to enable the corporeal creation and sharing of stories to create a socially constructed narrative that became to a great extent, a collective and communal experience (Forgasz, 2014; Linds & Vettraino, 2008; Pässilä et al., 2015). Interpretation of the shared narrative appeared to offer all within the process new insights, not just the individual who initially created and told the story.

While the 6PSM enabled thematic story building and story structures to emerge that connected directly with individuals' practice, less evident in the findings is the impact or influence of archetypal roles within the interpretation of story. The stories created and told in the group indicated a variety of archetypal roles and structures – for example, the wise old man role is evident in the 'all seeing eye' character within P:B's story and the 'cat' in P:D's story fulfils the role of villain (for example, Jung, 1970; Jung & Franz,

1964; Landy, 1991, 1993) – however there is little evidence that there were any particular insights gained by the individuals in the group directly connecting with specific archetypal roles. In addition, the impact of the process on the development of new insights around organisational culture and cultural context (Boje, 2002; Gabriel, 2000; Gabriel & Connell, 2010; Roseler, 2006) and the form of cultural re-embedding referred to by Horsdal (2012) is not evident. However, it is possible to conclude from the findings relating to both P:B and P:C that some significant insights were unearthed due to the process that were directly connected to their professional practice within their shared organisational context (Boje, 2001, 2008; Cunliffe, 2002). Although the evidence suggested that these insights had impact on the individuals concerned and their interaction with the organisation, it would not be possible to conclude that there was a lasting impact on the wider organisation itself.

4.7 ENHANCING PRACTICE – IMPACT: DISCUSSION

The impact of the story process on the participants' professional practice is explored in relation to changes they made to their ways of working that in their view enhanced their professional practice. Enhancement of professional practice is defined from the findings as being moments of transformational learning; 'aha' moments. These moments could arguably be likened to 'stop' moments referred to by Appelbaum (1995) and Fels (2009a, 2012, 2015) which are significant temporal and aesthetic moments of stillness, allowing significant and transformational learning to emerge. Arguably these are moments of reflexion; reflexive action. Although there is some uncertainty from the findings over the level or degree of transformational learning that occurred for P:A and P:B, there is evidence to suggest that all of these identifiable experiences created significant learning for the participants in the group which they were able to take forward and put into practice, noticeably enhancing the ways in which they worked, the decisions they took about their work and/or the relationships within their working contexts. Cunliffe (2004) refers to these as moments where the individual is 'struck' by an intuitive or instinctive learning experience that moves them forward in their action, a view supported by Corlett (2012). In addition, it is possible to conclude from the findings that these moments

contained physically experienced, or felt, qualities that can be defined as embodied and aesthetic in that they constituted a sensory awareness of learning in action (Kinsella, 2007; Sutherland, 2012).

Knowing, as a process, action, activity or experience, can be consciously understood – as Fels (2012) described it, a tug on the sleeve – or can be unconscious or sub-conscious (Linds, 2008), only becoming evident through temporal and/or aesthetic distance. All participants described moments of transformation in their understanding of self. For P:C, these moments appeared to revolve around behaviours and interactions with others as well as understanding his own desire and need to evolve and change within his professional context. He examined his motivations for actions and, through engagement with the 6PSM and connected dramatic conventions, he had what he termed as 'powerful' and 'revelatory' transformational moments in his thinking that led to changes in his work behaviours sustained over the period of at least a year.

The most tangible evidence of impact on professional practice was seen in P:D's experiences. P:D's transformational experiences led to a change in jobs, promotion and ultimately achievement of one of her professional life goals which was to head up a school. In reflecting on the significant, or 'aha', moments that she experienced during the work with 6PSM P:D stated that understanding how her behaviours and actions impacted on others through the story process enabled her to change her thought process and feelings in her professional context, thereby making a positive impact on working relations (p.160).

Although P:B indicated during Stage 2 that she had not had a significant epistemological shift in thinking as a result of the work done, evidence from VS8 indicated that P:B was indeed struck (Corlett, 2012; Cunliffe, 2004) by the realisation that difficult or challenging individuals or situations in the workplace can be avoided or dealt with simply by steering clear of them. In fact, P:B acknowledged during the evaluation interview that this had for her been potentially a 'minor aha!' moment; not 'revelatory' but rather 'revealing'.

The findings also suggest that the process was socially constructed, influenced and impacted upon the development of transformational learning.

As previously discussed during Chapter 2 – Literature Review, knowledge is derived from real, lived and shared experiences rather than from deductive reasoning or processing (Fook, 2010; Pässilä et al., 2015; Thompson & Pascal, 2011) and it was in these moments that shared knowledge appeared to develop. For example, both P:C and P:D seemed to be significantly influenced by P:B's 'minor aha' moment during VS8 which focused on her behaviours and interactions with the 'beast' in P:A's story, with both mentioning this as transformational learning in the evaluation interview a year after the 6PSM sessions had ended.

In relation to transformational moments of learning for P:A, there is limited evidence from the findings to indicate that there was any long term impact on her professional practice as a result of the work carried out during the study. As it was not possible to contact her for Stage 2, inferences can only be drawn from the work done during the sessions that took place over approximately a year. During this time, it is possible to argue that, like P:B, P:A had minor moments of transformational learning where significant new knowledge was unveiled and assimilated into her existing schema. For example, perception of others and different perspectives were two areas mentioned by her in her reflections on the process (p.153). In addition, her reflections during the sessions on the work of the group suggested that there were moments of meaning for her that unsettled her conventional way of thinking and being (Pässilä et al., 2015) and these disruptions enabled her to challenge assumptions she made about her professional practice with a view to taking new learning and behaviours forward (Fook, 2010).

Having examined the findings relating to the three separate elements of the research question, the following chapter considers how these marry together to form an holistic response to the original research question which is:

> *In what ways can the 6PSM be used within the broad context of education, to explore, interpret and enhance practitioners' embodied meaning making processes in order to effect change in their professional practice?*

The findings are pulled together and key results are summarised in Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Implications, along with my reflections.

CHAPTER 5 –
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS: OVERVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine how a particular storytelling method, normally used within the field of Dramatherapy, could be used as a tool for critical reflection by educational professionals to explore, interpret and enhance their practice. During this research I have investigated the 6-Part-Story Method as a vehicle for engaging in co-constructed learning experiences in which new knowledge is cognitively, affectively and physically created and 'known'. From this, a new spiral model of embodied and reflexive learning has been developed that identifies a number of thematic parts to the process of exploration, interpretation and enhancement of practice.

In this concluding chapter, some of the key results are highlighted along with a discussion about the strengths and limitations of the approaches taken to the study, with consideration given to the original contribution of the study to the fields of knowledge in both Dramatherapy and education. The potential for further research, policy and practice are also considered as part of the implications of this study, with a particular focus on organisational policy development in the area of self-reflection, review and continuous professional development (CPD).

5.2 KEY RESULTS

5.2.1 ENHANCING PRACTICE – EVIDENCING IMPACT

As has been discussed in sections 4.4 and 4.7 in the previous chapter, there were moments of transformation in the participants' learning created by the embodied, reflexive process of the 6PSM. These moments of transformation suggest evidence to support the impact of the experiences on the individuals' continued practice, which they reflected upon in Stage 2 of the research process; an evaluative and reflective interview which took place a year following the end of Stage 1. In that time, three of the four participants indicated ways in which their practice had positively changed and which they

attributed to the work developed in the study. Two of the three participants that attended Stage 2 indicated that these moments of learning were significant transformations for them. P:C indicated that he had changed his approach to challenge in his workplace which had been as a result of what he termed 'road to Damascus moments'; moments of heightened and significant learning. P:D's transformation was more tangible. Her story (see Appendix N.4) related to significant change in her work role during Stage 1. As a result of the embodied and reflexive process she engaged in during Stage 1, she engaged in two significant job changes that led to two promotions and enabled her to achieve a life time ambition of being the head teacher of a school. She attributed this change during Stage 2 to the work carried out with this process.

The third participant, P:B, experienced what she termed as 'minor aha moments'; experiences that gave her longer lasting insight and that she returned to in Stage 2 of the study. As the fourth participant, P:A, did not attend Stage 2, it is not possible to state that she had any long lasting transformational moments in the process. However, there is evidence to indicate (see section 4.4.1) that she had significant moments of insight that stuck with her for the duration of Stage 1 and that impacted on her continued understanding and evolution of herself.

5.2.2 THE 6PSM AS A CONDUIT TO REFLEXIVE PRACTICE

As has been discussed in Chapter 2 – Literature Review, the development of story structure follows a particular pattern in most cases that involves the construction of a scene in which action occurs that has some capacity for changing the world (Herman, 2009). In the case of the 6PSM, the results suggest that this story creation/telling process offers a useful structure or framework in which individuals can develop fictional stories based on experiences that they have had in their professional situations. The fictionalisation of these stories appeared to enable a degree of distance to be generated between the reality of the participant's professional situation and the fictional story that represented it. This in turn seemed to offer a safety net for exploration of practice and for self-awareness to be developed (Gersie, 1997; Gersie & King, 1990).

The results also suggest that the 6PSM approach could act as a platform from which to develop further critical reflection and reflexive behaviour leading to transformational moments of learning (Fook, 2002, 2010; Mezirow, 1991). The use of visual images in the form of cards appears to have enabled some of the participants to gain a strong physical connection to the various elements of the stories they created and heard; in particular P:A and P:C. Visual imagery and symbolism appear in many of the discussions highlighted in the analysis of the results suggesting that the picture cards created bridges for the imagination to move from the abstract to the real.

The results also suggest that the images may have created barriers to understanding for at least one participant – P:B – because of the way in which the image was symbolically interpreted by others in the group. As has been explored in Chapter 3 – Research Methodology, the use of image cards was a deviation from the original 6PSM model in which participants would draw the six elements of the story structure. While the impact of symbolism on the story process through the use of image cards should not be overlooked, it is my view that the use of existing images reduced anxiety (Lindsay, 2015; Miraglia, 2008) and also offered opportunities for participants to challenge their own and others' assumptions; P:C's struggle with the symbolism associated with the 'deer' card and the 'key' card in particular (pp.128) created greater learning potential.

5.2.3 COLLABORATIVE STORY EXPERIENCES AND ENHANCED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Results from this research support the literature suggesting that story creation and telling is a social activity, rooted in the need for individuals to communicate with others and be understood (Gotschall, 2013). For the participants, the results suggest that the act of sharing, responding to and working with own and others' stories was fundamental to the individuals' experiences of the process, and to their overall exploration, interpretation and enhancement of practice (Corlett, 2012; Haberstron & Kottler, 2008; Keevers & Treleavan, 2011).

Throughout the sessions and interviews captured in the discussion in Chapter 4, participants indicated the experience of connecting with others

strongly influenced their self-development and understanding of their own practice (Fook, 2010; Fook & Gardner, 2007). This appears from the results to be related to functioning collectively as a group in which the participants were able to gain alternative perspectives on their own stories and also participate in the development of others'. In Stage 2, the three participants present all referred to the shared experience of creating an embodied image of the anonymous story (pp.144). Analysis of that interview, along with the results gained from analysis of the other data, suggest that the collective experience of reflexively exploring and interpreting one individual's story created ripples of reflection later in the participants' lives that drew them back to the knowledge and understanding gained from that collaborative connection.

Also suggested from the results of the research is new knowledge and understanding being built on from previous sessions; for example, P:C returned in VS5 to the experience of sharing his story in VS4, having reflected after the session on the process. P:A did the same in relation to her experience of telling the story of Libra. This would suggest that participants wanted to bring back to the group new knowledge and share the experience of constructing new understanding through reflective and reflexive experiences. Fels (2009a) indicates that the act of storytelling is a courageous one, even when the story is fictional. Results from the research would appear to support this view, with three of the participants highlighting some degree of anxiety linked to the idea of being judged or making a mistake. The fact that participants still continued to share and respond to stories would suggest that there was a sense of safety in the group, that trust had been built and that the collaborative process was offering some benefit for those participating (Gersie, 1990; Gersie & King, 1997; Simmons, 2006b).

The results also suggest that the process of knowledge creation for each participant was not necessarily temporally connected to their own story sharing event. Indeed, the participants seem to have dipped in and out of both reflexive and reflective moments throughout, tapping into different parts of their overall learning process. For example, P:A and P:B both indicated a sense of anxiety initially in using the 6PSM process itself whereas P:C appeared to be comfortable with the process and moved forward with

exploring an external individual's story quickly. However, she appeared to return to the exploration phase with the 6PSM process when she began to tell and then work reflexively with her own story. This suggests a more emergent process of knowledge creation, with one initial strand of learning connected to another and then returned to with more information to assimilate at a later stage. It is my view that this form of socially constructed, spiral learning (Bruner, 1996) created opportunities for the participants to interweave existing and new knowledge. However, the results from this research also suggest further layers of learning that were achieved through the collaborative process and this has led to the creation of a new model of embodied and reflexive practice which is explored below.

5.2.4 TOWARDS A 3 DIMENSIONAL SPIRAL MODEL OF EMBODIED, REFLEXIVE LEARNING

As has already been discussed in this chapter, the 6PSM as a framework for story creation and telling, has been a key element in the overall embodied, reflexive process that the participants engaged in during this study. The results from this research explored in the previous chapter, suggest that the stages of group formation (finding each other's and own identity in the group), knowledge gathering (what each session is like, what is required of a participant in the process), technical practice (about the 6PSM and its process) and trust building (understanding how to work together, learning what is safe to share and not to share, openness to vulnerability of self and others), worked to create possibilities for exploration of practice to occur.

The results also suggest that the participants' knowledge and understanding about the 6PSM as a process, along with their experiences of trust building and vulnerability continued to develop throughout the period of time that the 6PSM sessions were operational. The knowledge and understanding that was generated through the collaborative acts of telling and listening to an individual's story, appeared to bring moments of insight; additional knowledge linked to an existing understanding, new knowledge created through the shared experience. These insights seemed to occur through a process of reflecting (on experiences during and outside of the sessions) and reflexing (in the experience as it occurs), the results

suggesting that the latter was also directly connected to the physicality of the experience the participant engaged in. The story sharing process also appeared to offer an immediacy of response that seemed to enable participants to better embody the characters and experiences within theirs, and others', stories and thus interpret their own professional situations from a broader perspective. In this way, the participants appeared to create meta-levels of reflexion (reflexive action), or metaxic moments (Boal, 1995) where they became both 'actor' and 'character' in the stories they were telling/listening. This suggests that the participants' reflexive learning was thereby deepened through the physical connection with the story process and through the opportunities for a more varied interpretation of practice that a collaborative approach offered.

As the process of creating, telling, listening and embodying stories further developed, the results suggest that participants' exploration and interpretation of their own and others' practice led to moments of pivotal learning. The participants termed these moments as transformational or 'aha' moments and some spoke of them as being 'revelationary' [sic] and powerful. Evolving out of insights gained through embodied interpretation of practice, the transformational moments participants felt appear to have created another layer of reflexive learning which individuals, and the group as a whole, returned to at different points in the research process.

This 'dipping in and out' of moments of awareness or knowledge creation was something that appeared to occur throughout the research and is indicative of a model of learning in which each part or strand is interconnected. Much like Indra's Web (Loy, 1993) the results suggest that each layer of learning – the exploration of practice, the interpretation of experience and the enhancement of practice through transformational moments – reflected and connected with another, with participants appearing to move in and out of the layers of learning at different points in the process. Unlike more traditional models of learning or reflective cycles (for example, Gibbs, 1988; Kolb, 1984), apparent from the results of the research is a new model of reflexive processing that operates as a 3-dimensional spiral, akin to Bruner's (1990) original concept of spiral learning.

In this new model of embodied and reflexive development, new knowledge is created in waves of experiences relating to the three areas of exploration, interpretation and enhancement explored in this study. At the core of this spiral model is the 6PSM, the basis on which reflexive practice is built. The three areas form three strands; exploration, interpretation and enhancement, and offer layers of engagement with the reflexive process. An individual's starting point for this reflexive process is where the three axes meet; point zero. As the individual experiences events, their reflexive process moves outwards, forwards and upwards; like tidal waves moving in towards the shore. The individual assimilates new knowledge and understanding, feeling reflexively their own development, as their learning progresses. Considering the tidal wave analogy again, the learning can also move backwards and downwards, retreating to create further links to existing schema, appearing to move backwards in order to learn more about oneself.

As the waves continue to unfold further into shore, so the individual's practice will be enhanced through the reflexive experiences of the story creating/listening/telling process. The waves of knowledge creation continue to move forward and retreat, connecting back to different points during the learning process as the individual revisits concepts of trust and vulnerability, information gathering, embodiment and physicality and the building of new insights and reflexive experiences. Each new visit creates a new layer of additional knowledge gained from the moments of transformation that have occurred previously, thereby enriching the experience of exploration and interpretation. Ultimately, the end point of the learning journey is not known as, like the tide, the learning is created in waves that intersect and blend into each other, becoming felt and sometimes transitory in nature (Cunliffe, 2004).

Throughout this new model of embodied, reflexive learning, the key strands or themes that emerged from the research are shown:

- Exploration of the process and of self – information gathering, individual and group, story creating/telling/listening as 6SPM,
- Trust and vulnerability – what I want to share and not share,
- Embodiment and physicality – physical connection with the stories told/heard, 'felt' knowledge creation,

- Insight and reflexivity – collaborative storied experiences, socially constructed knowledge, in-action knowing,
- Transformational moments – 'aha' moments of transformational learning

Although the strands are connected with the three areas of engagement mentioned above – exploration, interpretation and enhancement of practice – they are not fixed in place. The results of the research suggest that individuals reconnect with each of these themes at different points in their development of new self-knowledge and therefore the model reflects the fluidity of that approach.

This embodied and reflexive learning model offers a 3-dimensional framework for exploring, understanding and enhancing practice. As a result, this outcome has the potential to influence organisational policy development related to critical reflection and reflexivity in practitioners and professionals. What is now required is to test this model to gain a better understanding of how the 6PSM approach can support practice enhancement in a wider context.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The decision was taken at the outset of the research process, to work with a small group of participants. This was a potential limitation of the study as it limited the amount of broad data that could be collected and also meant that it would be not be possible to generalise any of the results from the research. In addition, the size of group also links to another limitation of the study which relates to the lack of diverse representation. All participants were white, heterosexuals between the ages of 35 and 55. Although there was no focus on utilizing a diverse sample for research purposes, further study should include a larger group size and a wider background of participants to ensure more diverse data.

Another potential limitation of the study was the previous knowledge that I had of the participants who became the core group of the study and the impact of researcher bias on the process. Although, as has been discussed in Chapter 3, the original sample group was opened up to include an equal number of participants whom I had not previously known, the reality was that

the group with whom I worked for the practical research element of this doctorate were known to me. Acknowledging this from the outset has been a fundamental way of addressing the possibility of bias in the research (Miles et al., 2014), as has sharing my findings with the participants and my research supervisor, to crystallize my thinking and ensure that bias was acknowledged and addressed where possible. In undertaking further research in this area (as discussed later in this chapter) I would wish to widen the participant engagement considerably and look to create groups within that to take account of the point made above about creating communities of practice where trust is fundamental to the story sharing process. To do that I would also have to acknowledge the other limitation of the research which is the unique element I as researcher and facilitator brought to the study. My own background in the model, as well as my approach to delivery, could not be scaled up 'as is'. To widen the participation group and increase numbers, the approach would need to be understood by others who could facilitate the delivery. This would also then create a useful further research question related to the impact of the facilitator on the process.

The original 6PSM model devised by Lahad (1992, 1993) involved participants in the process drawing six images to reflect the six elements of the story. A potential limitation of this research study was that participants used picture cards (Appendix H) instead of drawing their own images, creating the possibility that stories told would be shaped by the cards rather than the participants.

Existing knowledge and expertise brought to a study can be seen both as a strength and limitation (Maxwell, 2004: Miles et al., 2014). Although it is possible to view this as a limitation due to the potential for bias and preconceptions relating to ways in which the model might be worked with, this has been addressed by an open acknowledgement of prior knowledge throughout the study. I believe in this case, my professional knowledge of the 6PSM model was a strength that I as researcher/facilitator brought to the research process. A final limitation of the study was the focus on the 6PSM itself rather than a broadening out of the research to include the analytical matrix that was developed alongside it; the BASIC Ph. The BASIC Ph modes of coping are belief or value based, affective or emotional,

socialisation, imagination, cognitive and physical. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the 6PSM itself is a diagnostic tool developed to capture an individual's story which when analysed through the BASIC Ph lens, would enable a Dramatherapist to understand what coping modes that individual has when dealing with trauma. However, this matrix is also subject to criticism in relation to the lack of empirical evidence relating to the validity of the coping strategies suggested from the application of the model. In this research the decision was taken early on to focus purely on the story creation structure to engage participants in a new way of developing stories about their practice and thus develop an understanding of how others' and their own way of thinking about professional practice can be shared and new connections can be made. Undertaking further research in this area would map the stories told to the BASIC Ph matrix of coping modes in order to enable individuals to reflect on their coping strategy approaches and develop reflexive ways of building these into their professional environments. In addition, further research into the BASIC Ph categories and consistent application would add unique knowledge to this area.

5.4 ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

A number of models of reflective practice have been put forward (see Figures 1a-1c), all of which focus on a cyclical approach to learning from experience. Simply put, this cyclical approach is based on a 'think-do-review' process which could be described as linear in fashion; with one part of the cycle feeding the next. Although it is possible to return to previous points in any of these cycles, the models have been constructed to show a linear route through. Whilst beneficial in understanding the stages of a reflective process, a cyclical model does not take into account the individual moving upwards or forwards in their learning as the cycle always returns to the same place. Bruner's (1996) spiral curriculum model build's on Dewey's (1938) concept of impulse driven learning, and offers a deeper and more 3-dimensional way of viewing learning and reflection, identifying that an individual builds upwards from previous knowledge, stacking learning as each experience adds new knowledge to the last. However, a spiral model also has limitations in that it considers learning moving upwards and therefore forwards, but not outwards or backwards.

This thesis contributes new knowledge to the field through a new model of embodied and reflexive development that synthesises the elements of moving forwards and upwards identified by previous reflective cycles, and develops a further dimension that can be described as moving outwards and sometimes backwards in knowledge creation. The results of this study indicate that in undertaking reflexive practice, professionals explore and interpret their experiences through thematic lenses, and that these explorations and interpretations are not linear, but instead move upwards, outwards, backwards and forwards as their knowledge deepens and they enhance their practice.

As has been discussed in Chapter 2, although the 6PSM is known within the field of Dramatherapy, there are relatively few publications in existence that explore this model. There are also very few empirical studies that consider the use of the 6PSM and nearly all of these are focused in a clinical setting (either in the field of Dramatherapy practice, or in related field of health or social care practice, such as nursing). At the time of writing this, Elmaliach's (2013) chapter on the use of the 6PSM and associated BASIC Ph matrix was the only theoretical publication reporting research into this model outside the field of Dramatherapy or related health care professions. Indeed, in Lahad et al.'s (2013) text, Leykin (2013) highlights the fact that very little empirical research has been carried out into this model. As such, this doctoral study provides valuable and much needed empirical data and new perspective on this valuable diagnostic tool and offers an original contribution to both Dramatherapy theory and practice.

This study also provides an original contribution to the subject area of reflection, critical reflection and reflexivity. It combines a number of key elements of process together to offer a new multi-modal perspective on practice and adds terms to the lexicon of reflexivity. Adapting the term 'reflexion' from the scientific field of sound and light wave studies, 'reflexion' used in this context is defined as deep, 'in-the-moment' learning. A reflexive act that draws together embodied, felt knowledge and the reframing of existing schema to create new knowledge. Reflexion thus becomes the 'in-the-moment' reflective act, and 'reflexing' being the act of reflecting-in-action. This doctoral study draws together research and theory from the areas of

storytelling and narrative, reflection, critical reflection and reflexivity, and embodied and performative practice to create a new theoretical argument for socially constructed and embodied, reflexive processes.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The development of a 6PSM model of embodied reflexion opens up implications for a range of stakeholders involved in developing reflective and reflexive practice in their professional fields. If we consider just those stakeholders situated within the caring professions most commonly associated with reflective and reflexive practice, these stakeholders would include organisations where cyclical evaluation or review processes are currently in use (for example, schools, community centres, hospitals and outreach clinics), institutions where training for the caring professions is offered (for example, teacher education institutions, nursing, midwifery, health care and social care institutions), and practitioners in the field (teachers, social workers, community learning practitioners, nurses) and those managing and leading such individuals and organisations.

5.5.1 LOCAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As has previously been acknowledged in Chapter 2, there is a vast quantity of research and discursive papers focused on the development of stories and storytelling within organisations in some form or other. Story making and telling are therefore not new concepts to in many organisational cultures. However, collaborative creation and telling of stories utilising embodied processes in the form of Image Theatre and other applied theatre techniques takes the idea of story generation to a new level of critical thinking and encourages professionals to reflect and reflex in a new way. Clearly there would be benefit in organisations adopting this model of embodied reflexivity to encourage professional knowledge creation and communities of practice development and therefore organisational policy needs to be developed to accommodate this different way of working.

In many organisations within the caring professions, reflexivity and reflection are common practice. Indeed reflection is mentioned in the British Association of Social Work's (BASW, 2012) code of ethics, and it forms a core part of the professional guidance from GTCS (GTCS, n.d) for initial

teacher education and for practicing teachers. For organisations like these, the challenge will be extending that practice – often focused on reflective writing (see for example, Lyons, 2006; Maich et al., 2000; Newton, 2000; Parr et al., 2000) – to include the development of story structuring through the 6PSM model, and enabling an embodied process drawing on the theatre and drama techniques to support the reflexive process. Endorsing the model as a way of creating critical reflexive opportunities for practice will enable practitioners to add to their mastery of practice within their chosen field.

5.5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PRACTITIONERS

Although there is some dispute as to a definition for professionalism and professional practice across many of the caring professions (Ingram, Fenton, Hodson & Jindal-Snape, 2014) there is an understanding within many – for example, social work, teaching and nursing – that professionalism is about upholding standards of delivery, quality contact with stakeholders and continuous professional development; reflective or evaluative processes are viewed as core approaches to doing this. (for example, BASW, 2012 and GTCS, n.d). For example, when writing about reflective and reflexive practice in social work practitioners, Ingram et al. (2014) underscore the importance of the capacity of practitioners to make hard decisions based on facts and soft information in the form of reflective understanding of any given situation.

However, often these methods are focused on reflective discussion with supervisors or in journaling or portfolio writing; frequently seen as modes of assessment of reflective practice in the training programmes associated with caring professions (for example, Jindal-Snape & Holmes, 2009; Lyons, 2006; Maich et al., 2000; Newton, 2000; Parr et al., 2000). Practitioners benefit from real world experiences which enable them to form deeper connections between existing knowledge and new knowledge; in other words, individuals engaged in collaborative and embodied processes of learning will develop a richer understanding of the complex situations they engage in (Corlett, 2001; Cunliffe, 2002).

The 6PSM embodied and reflexive model can be utilised within supervision or reflection sessions with small and larger groups, enabling

practitioners to engage in useful learning exchanges around critical incidents. In order for this to happen, individual practitioners and educational institutions need to build this way of reflecting into their existing practice as a core process for critically evaluating professional capacity. There also needs to be an acknowledgement of the importance of creating a safe space in which dialogue can occur; participants need to feel safe to trust in order to engage fully.

5.6 FUTURE RESEARCH

As discussed in Chapter 1, my professional practice from which this study evolved has been developing over the period of this research process. The learning I have gained about reflexive practice from creating the embodied, reflexive practice model has already been embedded into my current professional activities; as a university academic and as a consultant operating my own business. I therefore see this model of practice being developed further to enable individuals and teams within other professional fields to explore, interpret and enhance their practice. Further empirical research is needed in order to understand and evidence the impact of this model of embodied and reflexive learning on individuals. This could be done with a larger scale study focused on one professional field in order to aid transferability of knowledge and skills relating to the facilitation of the 6PSM and related applied theatre techniques. For example, the area of initial education for teachers, health care and social care practitioners would be an ideal context within which to develop a focused and longitudinal study into the benefits on the 'end user' – the pupils, patients or communities – of the professional engaging in the embodied, reflexive process.

Organisational implications were considered earlier in this chapter and this model offers opportunities to develop communities of practice within and across organisations that look to share and understand their professional experiences through socially constructed learning opportunities. A further area of research is the longitudinal impact of the 6PSM as an embodied and reflexive model within different contexts and exploring a range of data collection possibilities such as audio and visual diaries, and group and organisational story conversations.

Since beginning this research journey, my professional field has changed considerably and my main job is within a university context as head of business and enterprise. I see this as one avenue for new research to emerge and I was particularly struck by Elmaliach's (2013) work on the use of the BASIC Ph model with entrepreneurs and businesses to consider capacity for resilience. I use the 6PSM and Image Theatre techniques currently with my Business (Team Entrepreneurship) students (http://www.bishopg.ac.uk/study/ug/business/Pages/default.aspx) to explore their individual and team stories as part of their developing understanding the psychology of teams in organisations. Further research is planned involving the development of the embodied, reflexive model proposed here with team coaches and team entrepreneurs engaged in the BA (Hons) Business (Team Entrepreneurship) programmes running in University of West of England and Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln. The proposed research will encompass a two year longitudinal study linking the embodied, reflexive practice model with the concept of negative capability and active 'stop' moments, like those described by Appelbaum (1995) and Fels (for example, 2009a).

Finally, an area of interest already alluded to and not tapped into for this research study lies in the use of the BASIC Ph matrix developed by Lahad alongside the 6PSM. As mentioned previously, there is no empirical evidence of the efficacy of the BASIC Ph model in determining accurately and consistently definitions for coping strategies and this is a potential area of further research that would add to the growing knowledge of how individuals cope with professional challenges. The results discussed in Chapter 4 suggest that the 6PSM as a model of story creation and sharing, offers participants a structured and safe way in which to explore their own practice, with a view to learning from and enhancing it. The BASIC Ph matrix would extend that knowledge and understanding by enabling participants to explore their coping tendencies and to draw on that knowledge to further enhance their practice.

EPILOGUE -
REFLEXIONS ON MY JOURNEY

I have chosen to conclude my thesis with 6-Part-Story that follows on from the previous one created and told in Chapter 1. Both were created as reflective and reflexive explorations of all of the experiences I have lived, felt and known during this doctoral study process. In the telling of this story, I offer a way of understanding the impact of this experience on me. It has been all consuming, a battle of internal self-doubt and lack of belief set against a desire to achieve and a will to see it through. I have had to learn a new language; that of academic writing. I thought I knew how to speak this language but have had to learn to communicate all over again. This story is reflective because I am looking back at the journey travelled, making sense of the stories that have emerged in the process of travelling and creating new narratives; some shared and some alone. The story is also reflexive, because in the act of writing this I am feeling, physically and emotionally, the content that is appearing before me as I type. This is a courageous act indeed!

AN EMERGING STORYTELLER PART II

"I have emerged!", said the Story Collector as she climbed the last rung of the ladder. "Or am I still emerging?"The battle to reach this place had been more terrible and exhilarating that she could have imagined.

Shaken and confused about where to start and what to do. She withdrew to herself and considered what she knew. The Collector knew she was a sociable character by nature, and she knew that sharing her ideas with others would enable her knowledge to grow. Growing her knowledge would help her unlock her own story, one that she wanted to tell but was afraid to do so in case it should not make sense or show a lack of skill. She was a Collector, after all, not a Teller! She could listen for hours to others' stories but had never required the discipline of gathering, sorting and reflecting on ideas in order to tell her own.

However, she had a way forward. She had an idea to gather around her a group of people whose stories she was really keen to hear and learn from. She felt that by creating a space to make and tell and listen to each others' stories, she could finally unlock her own. She set off to create a Storytellers' group and began the process of gathering people with stories to share.

The gathering, however, was not easy.

"People are people", Wise Counsel had said to her, "they are no more predictable than the weather."

And indeed she found great challenge at all stages of her attempt to pull together a group. However, gather them she did, ploughing through the obstacles of time, geography, energy and desire until she finally had a core group of four who eagerly entered the story process.

In fact, so excited was she by the keenness of her group and the stories they wanted to share that she found herself giving less attention to some parts of the process that would help her to reach her own story, preferring instead to let ideas emerge as the story tellers wove their magic.

And magic it was!

To the Collector's delight, the tellers all found joy in the process, trust in the group and, very importantly, all spoke of the new ideas about their own stories they now

had as a result of sharing and discussing each others'. As the weeks wore on, guided through the process by the Collector's facilitation, the Storytellers brought their stories to life enacting and re-enacting them as they questioned each other about 'why' and 'what' and 'how' and 'who'.

And yet the Collector felt alone. She was unable to share the delight she felt in the Storytellers' processes, careful not to influence or determine the direction of the stories and ideas. As the weeks wore on, the group's need to share began to ebb until one day only three Storytellers appeared and the Collector realised that the group was coming to a natural end. They said their farewells and promised to return to the very spot one year later to share new stories of their journeys.

As the Collector watched them leave she thought again of her desire to tell her story. Excited at the chance to now work on what her story might be, she retreated to her home, carrying with her the Storytellers' stories and the knowledge they had generated with each other, and she sat down to write.

Days passed……

Weeks passed……..

Months and years passed……

…….and nothing.

The Collector could not write!

And if she could not write, how could she tell her story?

Although many years were passing, the Collector was not idle. She found plenty of distractions to keep her busy; new jobs to do, new ideas to hatch, new stories to hear. But in the back of her mind was always the whisper of the story she wanted to tell, calling to her with increasing urgency as she tried not to hear.

The more the Collector avoided the story, the louder it called.

The more the Collector refused to listen to the story, the harder it became to forget it.

The more the Collector tried to forget the story, the worse she felt, until tired, and ill and defeated she had determined to give up her quest and content herself with being only a Collector and never a Storyteller. As she wandered home one afternoon, she chanced upon a new Storyteller to the area. The Collector found herself sitting and sharing with the Storyteller her thoughts on the area, what was good and what was bad. Before long, the Collector was also sharing her thoughts on her story which was being drawn from her by the Storyteller's curiosity.

After many hours, the sun had set and the Collector was about to bid her farewells. The Storyteller caught her sleeve and offered her a gift. A shard of glass which contained within it the Collector's story, reflected in the minute fractures and surfaces that the shard contained. As the Collector raised the shard to the dying light of the sun, she could see her whole story, from start to finish, mapped out before her and ready for the telling.

"You told this", the Storyteller said. "And the retelling will not be easy, it never is, but you are a Storyteller, make no bones about it. You just have to decide if this is a story you really want to tell."

With that, the Storyteller stood up and shook the Collector's hand.

"It was a pleasure meeting you, Storyteller", said the Storyteller.

"Likewise", said the new Storyteller.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

External Examiner's Agreement to 50% APEL Claim

Removed for confidentiality

APPENDIX B:

APEL Claim – Jindal-Snape and Vettraino, 2007

Removed for copyright reasons

APEL claim submitted March 2nd 2009 by Elinor Vettraino with regard to a published review of research paper carried out in collaboration with Dr Divya Jindal-Snape, University of Dundee

1. Jindal-Snape, D. and Vettraino, E. (2007), Drama techniques for the enhancement of social-emotional development in people with special needs: Review of research, in *International Journal of Special Education*, Vol 22, No 1, p107-117

	Percentage of contribution by claimant:				
	Review of literature	**Research design**	**Data collection**	**Data analysis**	**Write up**
Jindal-Snape and Vettraino (2007)	Review of publications and literature relating to qualitative research carried out in a range of settings. Claimant responsible for 50% of the papers reviewed	• Design agreed with co-researcher at the outset • Claimant responsible for 50% of research design	50%	50%	50%

I, the undersigned, as the collaborator in the development of these papers, agree that the claim made by Elinor Vettraino re her contribution to the research, is accurate:

Divya Jindal-Snape Date: 23.02.09

(DIVYA JINDAL-SNAPE)

APEL claim for review of publications and associated paper relating to using drama for social-emotional development with people with special needs 2007

1. Jindal-Snape, D. Vettraino, E. (2007) Drama Techniques for the Enhancement of Social-Emotional Development in People with Special Needs: Review of Research, in *International Journal of Special Education,* Vol 22, No 1, p107-117

The aim of this part of the APEL claim is to justify that the research and publication undertaken was at doctoral level. I have submitted this in five sections to reflect the broad themes within the Scottish Curriculum and Qualifications Framework Level 12 doctoral level criteria (SCQF, 2003). Given that the descriptors used in the SCQF framework are intended to provide a general understanding of the learning outcomes required for each level, I have taken them to be a 'best-fit' comparison rather than assuming that every qualification will match all characteristics of each outcome. Abbreviations used are defined next to the key indicators in the main body of the text and also in Appendix 1.

1. Knowledge and Understanding (subject or practice based)

This section aims to demonstrate the systematic development of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or professional practice. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 learning outcomes and requires demonstration of or work with:

- A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts (KU1)
- A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms (KU2)
- Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline (KU3)

In response to these criteria, I will reference evidence relating to knowledge and understanding of the research and literature around drama as a therapeutic process and as an educational tool. I will also evidence the use of process and issue based drama in developing social-emotional cognizance in individuals with special needs.

The Context

I have developed an interest in process and issue based drama connected with, in particular, the techniques within Theatre of the Oppressed pedagogical practice; Boal 2000. This interest has evolved through my past and present experiences as a teacher and teacher-educator; exploring the challenges and issues surrounding working with children with special educational needs and in particular those with social and emotional difficulties which manifest through behavioural challenges in the classroom.

In addition, I have developed a range of drama approaches that focus on using drama as a therapeutic intervention with children in classroom settings. These approaches are based on the work of Dramatherapists Jennings (1993, 1997), Cattanach (1996), Jones (2007) and Landy, but have been adapted for low level therapeutic interventions that can be applicable with all ages and with a range of needs. As a background to this; since 1997 I have been extensively involved in work with the British Association of Dramatherapists, sitting on their Executive for six years as an Associate member and for ten years I was their Link Person for Scotland. As a lecturer at the University of Dundee, I have furthered my interest in the benefits of drama for educational development through collaborative ventures (Vettraino and Williams, 2006, Linds and Vettraino, 2008, Jindal-Snape and Vettraino, 2007, Duffy and Vettraino, 2009) and have expanded on my initial experience of drama practice as a therapeutic tool to work with colleagues on the use of Image Theatre and collaborative story tackling issue based work with children in school settings and with practitioners who work with children and youth.

I have presented widely on the use of Image Theatre and story as therapeutic interventions, in particular at the Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed conferences (these are international conferences based in North

America particularly dedicated to this very specialised area of theatre practice) and National Drama conferences (National Drama is the professional organisation that supports general drama and theatre educators throughout the UK; their conferences are attended by national and international practitioners and theorists). I have also developed and delivered training programmes in relation to my work on therapeutic image theatre and reflective practice in CPD for teachers and education practitioners, and as part of the teacher education programmes (BEd Honours and PGDE Primary) at the University of Dundee for which I am the lecturer in Drama and Head of Expressive Arts. I have also developed a Masters level module for the new MSc in Child Care and Protection programme which is focused on therapeutic interventions for children and families.

Having a strong interest in the role of Image Theatre in developing reflective practice amongst student teachers and other professionals working with a range of specific needs, and also having a professional background myself connected with children and youth, I was motivated to collaborate with Dr Jindal-Snape in the development of a paper which investigated the research carried out in this area. Our desire in this review of literature was not to consider the work carried out but rather to consider the research methodology associated with it in order to gain an understanding of the processes currently in use and to expand the critical debate around robust and valid data collection of such intangible subject areas as drama and impact on the development of social and emotional processes.

Dr Jindal-Snape and I developed an analytical framework within which to explore the literature published about drama and effectiveness. To progress the study, we categorised the drama publications into two broad areas; those that had made use of discursive methodology and those that had made use of empirical methods in their research. I applied my extensive knowledge and understanding of educational and therapeutic drama processes to explore the literature around these issues prior to examining the discursive reports produced between 1990 and 2005. Evidence of my knowledge and understanding can be seen in the associated paper attached (KU1, KU3).

2. Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding

This section focuses on the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding to systematic enquiry in applied situations. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline (P1)
- Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms (P2)
- Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry (P3)
- Design and execute research, investigative or developmental projects to deal with new problems and issues (P4)
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices (P5)
- Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances (P6)

The research process was a review of literature and therefore demanded an enhanced understanding and practical application of literature review methodology (P1, P3, P4). It also required a substantial knowledge about significant and current research approaches within the fields of educational drama, process and social-emotional context development drama and special needs.

3. Generic cognitive skills

This section focuses on the development and application of generic cognitive skills. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues (G1)

- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues (G2)
- Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues (G3)
- Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information (G4)

The ability to critically analyse and explore the experiences and narratives of the participants involved in the studies I investigated is evident in the publication attached, as is the ability to synthesise the information collected in the specific contexts, which were numerous (G1). Creative and innovative insights into the research practice engaged with also demonstrated informed judgements about the lack of evidence produced and therefore questioned the experience for the participants (G4). The conclusions drawn from our paper indicated that whilst research appeared to be published, there was actually no empirical evidence base for it and questions around the safety and ethics of engaging in such research were raised, sparking new debate and critical dialogue around these processes (G2, G4).

4. Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

This section focused on the need to demonstrate the development and application of a significant range of communication, ICT and numeracy skills. It relates to demonstration of the ability to:

- Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose (IT1)
- Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms (IT2)
- Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work (IT3)
- Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data (IT4)

The paper produced as a result of the study undertaken was a collaborative venture which engaged a range of experiences in relation to communication of ideas. As a contribution to my part of the data analysis and literature

exploration, I developed a high level of debate and dialogue concerning the claims of effectiveness of dramatic approaches to working with individuals with special needs with my co-researcher Dr Jindal-Snape and with practitioners and academics in the educational drama field (IT1, IT2). In the writing up of the paper, I was also keen to ensure that readers could engage in the critical debate that was generated by the narrative approach to the study.

5. Autonomy, accountability and working with others

In this section the focus is on competence in relation to autonomy, accountability and working with others. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 Outcomes:

- Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities (A1)
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others (A2)
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues (A3)
- Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence (A4)
- Deal with complex ethical and professional issues (A5)

There was no Principal Investigator role allocated in this process, however, both authors/researchers took sole responsibility for their part in the study. I therefore reviewed, assessed and evaluated the discursive literature and Dr Jindal-Snape took on this role for the papers employing an empirical methodology (A1, A2). In our publication, Dr Jindal-Snape and I discussed the two forms of research approach as separate but collate the generalised issues within the debate about the lack of evidence base for much of the research claims associated with the use and effectiveness of drama in social-emotional development. Crucially we ask the question; is it '…ethical to engage people in interventions that are lacking in evidence base?' (2007: 108) which is connected to our own practice experiences and self-reflection on these (A1, A2, A3).

There were extremely complex ethical and professional issues to debate as a result of this review of research and, as mentioned above, our paper was clear to engage in this as we were keen to generate dialogue amongst practitioners claiming an evidence base for the effectiveness of their drama interventions (A5).

Table 1 sets out the proportion of the work I undertook in relation to the different aspects of the research and publication process.

Table 1: Claimant's contribution to research and paper cited

Paper cited		**Percentage of contribution by author:**			
	Review of literature	**Research design**	**Data collection**	**Data analysis**	**Write up**
Jindal-Snape and Vettraino (2007)	Review of publications and literature relating to qualitative research carried out in a range of settings. Claimant responsible for 50% of the papers reviewed.	Design agreed with co-researcher at outset Claimant responsible for 50% of research design	50%	50%	60%

REFERENCES

Boal, A. (1995) *The Rainbow of Desires: boal's method of theatre and therapy* London: Routledge

Boal, A. (2000) *Theatre of the Oppressed, third revised edition* London: Pluto Press

Cattanach, A., Chesner, A. and Jennings, S. (1993) *The Handbook of Dramatherapy* London: Routledge

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Linds, W. and Vettraino, E. (2008) Collective Imagining: Collaborative Story Telling through Image Theater. In *Forum: Qualitative Social Research,* Vol 9, No 2, Art. 56

Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (2003). *Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework: SCQF Handbook.* Retrieved March 26, 2008, from the SCQF Website: http://www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/Handbook%202004.pdf

Jindal-Snape, D., Vettraino, E., Lowson, A. and Macduff, W. (2008) Using Drama to Facilitate Primary-Secondary Transition, submitted and awaiting a response.

Jindal-Snape, D. and Vettraino, E. (2007) Drama Techniques for the Enhancement of Social-Emotional Development in People with Special Needs: Review of Research, in *International Journal of Special Education,* Vol 22, No: 1, p107-117

Vettraino, E. and Williams, M. (2006) A Voice without Words: using art and drama techniques to enable children to 'say it how it is and make it better', conference paper, unpublished, presented at 'Learning from Children and Young People Conference', Stirling, 24-25 January 2006

Appendix 1

Key Indicators taken from SCQF Document – abbreviations used in text

1. **Knowledge and Understanding (subject or practice based)**

This section aims to demonstrate the systematic development of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or professional practice. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 learning outcomes and requires demonstration of or work with:

- A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts (KU1)
- A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms (KU2)
- Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline (KU3)

2. **Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding**

This section focuses on the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding to systematic enquiry in applied situations. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline (P1)
- Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms (P2)
- Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry (P3)
- Design and execute research, investigative or developmental projects to deal with new problems and issues (P4)
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices (P5)
- Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances (P6)

3. Generic cognitive skills

This section focuses on the development and application of generic cognitive skills. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues (G1)
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues (G2)
- Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues (G3)
- Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information (G4)

4. Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

This section focused on the need to demonstrate the development and application of a significant range of communication, ICT and numeracy skills. It relates to demonstration of the ability to:

- Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose (IT1)
- Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms (IT2)
- Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work (IT3)
- Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data (IT4)

5. Autonomy, accountability and working with others

In this section the focus is on competence in relation to autonomy, accountability and working with others. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 Outcomes:

- Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities (A1)
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others (A2)
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues (A3)
- Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence (A4)
- Deal with complex ethical and professional issues (A5)

APPENDIX C:

APEL Claim – Linds and Vettraino, 2008

Removed for copyright reasons

APEL claim submitted March 1st 2009 by Elinor Vettraino with regard to research and published paper carried out in collaboration with Dr Warren Linds, Associate Professor, Concordia University, Canada

1. Linds, W. and Vettraino, E. (2008) Collective Imagining: Collaborative Story Telling Through Image Theater, in *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol 9. No 2. Art. 56.

	Percentage of contribution by claimant:				
	Review of literature	**Research design**	**Data collection**	**Data analysis**	**Write up**
Linds and Vettraino (2008)	Literature on image theatre, image and self-reflection. collaborative story making, therapeutic drama and dramatherapy techniques (50%)	• Design discussed at outset but developed independently from collaborator • Claimant responsible for 100% of own data collected (50% of whole)	100% (50% of whole paper contribution)	100% of own data (50% of whole paper contribution)	65%

I, the undersigned, as the collaborator in the development of this paper, agree that the claim made by Elinor Vettraino re her contribution to the research, is accurate:

Date: February 19/09

APEL claim for Image Theatre and Reflective Practice Research undertaken October 2006 to June 2007

1. Linds, W. and Vettraino, E. (2008) Collective Imagining: Collaborative Story Telling through Image Theater. In *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol 9, No 2, Art. 56.

The aim of this part of the APEL claim is to justify that the research and publication undertaken was at doctoral level. I have submitted this in five sections to reflect the broad themes within the Scottish Curriculum and Qualifications Framework Level 12 doctoral level criteria (SCQF, 2003). Given that the descriptors used in the SCQF framework are intended to provide a general understanding of the learning outcomes required for each level, I have taken them to be a 'best-fit' comparison rather than assuming that every qualification will match all characteristics of each outcome. Abbreviations used are defined next to the key indicators in the main body of the text and also in Appendix 1.

1. Knowledge and Understanding (subject or practice based)

This section aims to demonstrate the systematic development of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or professional practice. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 learning outcomes and requires demonstration of or work with:

- A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts (KU1)
- A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms (KU2)
- Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline (KU3)

In response to these criteria, I will reference evidence relating to knowledge and understanding of image theatre, self-reflective practice, therapeutic drama experiences and also collaborative story telling as a metaphor. I will

also discuss the planning, implementation and interpretation of qualitative, evaluative research carried out in relation to the above.

The Context

I have developed an interest in Image Theatre (part of the Theatre of the Oppressed pedagogical practice; Boal, 2000) through my past and present experiences as a teacher and teacher-educator and also through my work with reflective practice and drama as a therapeutic intervention. Since 1997 I have been extensively involved in work with the British Association of Dramatherapists, sitting on their Executive for six years as an Associate member and for ten years I was their Link Person for Scotland. As a lecturer at the University of Dundee, I have furthered my interest in the benefits of drama for educational development through collaborative ventures (Jindal-Snape and Vettraino, 2007, Vettraino and Williams, 2006) and have expanded on my initial experience of drama practice as a therapeutic tool to work with colleagues on the use of Image Theatre and collaborative story in particular as a vehicle for reflective practice.

I have presented widely on the use of Image Theatre and story as therapeutic interventions, in particular at the Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed conferences (these are international conferences based in North America particularly dedicated to this very specialised area of theatre practice) and National Drama conferences (National Drama is the professional organisation that supports general drama and theatre educators throughout the UK; their conferences are attended by national and international practitioners and theorists). I have also developed and delivered training programmes in relation to my work on Image Theatre and reflective practice in CPD for teachers and education practitioners, and as part of the teacher education programmes (BEd Honours and PGDE Primary) at the University of Dundee. I have also developed a Masters level module for the new MSc in Child Care and Protection programme which is focused on therapeutic interventions for children and families.

Having a strong interest in the role of Image Theatre in developing reflective practice and also having a professional background connected with children and youth, I was motivated to investigate the processes and experiences of

using Boal's Image Theatre conventions (and in particular the techniques within his Rainbow of Desire (1995) collection) to explore the professional practice of individuals working with children and young people. This work has been heavily influenced by the seminal works of authors such as Irving Goffman (on interaction as performance), Jill Lyn Felman (on teaching as performance) and also bell hooks (on the emancipatory practice of education. In addition I was keen to examine the place and purpose of this form of reflective practice amongst professionals working in the current educational climate of such governmental initiatives as Curriculum for Excellence (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence) , Determined to Succeed (http://www.determinedtosucceed.co.uk/dts/CCC_FirstPage.jsp) and Ambitious Excellent Schools.

In August 2006 I secured an unfunded commission to develop self-reflective work based on Image Theatre and story telling approaches with core members of a local charitable organisation working with youth (the SPACE Project, part of the Barnardos network). At the same time, I was engaging in a discourse around the impact of image and performance on interactions within 'change' settings with a colleague in Canada – Dr Warren Linds. Through this discussion, the idea of a collaborative and international research pilot evolved which had as basis in ethnographic methodology reflected through a narrative lens. With the agreement of the participants in the self-reflective group I was able to design and implement a programme of work over the period of a year which evolved as the group dynamic evolved.

To progress this study, I applied my extensive knowledge and understanding of the processes involved in Image Theatre and therapeutic drama interventions as well as my knowledge of the development of narratives as ethnographic 'markers' around which individuals and groups base their philosophies and upon which they pin their ideals and desires. This is as true of professional practice as it is of personal growth (Bruner, cited in Hinchman, 1997). Evidence of my knowledge and understanding can be seen in the writing up of this study which was done in collaboration with my colleague Dr Warren Linds (see attached paper) (KU1, KU3).

2. Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding

This section focuses on the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding to systematic enquiry in applied situations. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline (P1)
- Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms (P2)
- Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry (P3)
- Design and execute research, investigative or developmental projects to deal with new problems and issues (P4)
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices (P5)
- Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances (P6)

The development and implementation of the research project drew on a range of skills and expertise linked to techniques and tools within the specialised drama/theatre field of Theatre of the Oppressed. The research questions themselves were co-constructed with the participants and linked to organisational priorities for them. Because the project was very much centred around the individual participants, there was a need to ensure that the reflective work taking place linked to their own concerns and professional needs. This led to an ethnographic and grounded approach to the data collection that was very much narrative driven; what were their stories and how did they make use of them to influence the image work taking place? (P1, P2)

The initial stages of the project involved a range of sessions which related to physical dialogue through movement (Linds and Vettraino, 2008). This ‘dialogue’ pushed the boundaries for participants in terms of their understanding of self as practitioner, self as professional and self as human being. Originality was demonstrated through the use of Image Theatre and storytelling methodology to extract reflections on practice that could then be explored within a therapeutic context (P5, P6). I used a range of dramatic

story telling approaches based on analytical image, image of the images (Boal, 1995) and 6PSM (http://www.dent-brown.co.uk/new6psmintro.htm?67,17 for an explanation of the approach in a Dramatherapy context) in order to develop participants' sense of self. As the project developed, the group worked with an increasingly complex range of techniques to explore themselves as characters within their work settings. This involved physically embodying an analysis of individual characters to explore particular character traits and see how these impacted upon particular situations. The technique 'analytical image' (see Boal, 1995) was adapted to enable this approach (P5, P6).

3. Generic cognitive skills

This section focuses on the development and application of generic cognitive skills. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues (G1)
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues (G2)
- Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues (G3)
- Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information (G4)

The ability to critically analyse and explore the experiences and narratives of the individuals engaged with the image theatre work is evident in the publication attached, as is the ability to synthesise information collected in both contexts (Canada and here) to produce a detailed examination of the benefits of image as reflection on practice (G1). Creative and innovative insights into the individuals' practice were also offered, connecting quite abstract ideas with concrete experiences for the participants (G2). A key part of the research was linked to its evolutionary approach; the methodology grew with the experiences that the participants were undertaking. This meant that a proactive-reactive dynamic evolved which demanded creative

responses to issues being brought into the research arena. New dramatic forms and approaches were constantly being explored by me as facilitator of the work and there was a continual need to 'think on your feet' making judgements about lines of inquiry to approach or steer. In addition, there was a complexity involved in the fluid nature of my role which required creative management; I was facilitator of the process but also a co-participant and co-researcher (G3, G4).

4. Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

This section focused on the need to demonstrate the development and application of a significant range of communication, ICT and numeracy skills. It relates to demonstration of the ability to:

- Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose (IT1)
- Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms (IT2)
- Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work (IT3)
- Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data (IT4)

The design and development of the publication connected with the collaborative research was instigated by me and further developed with my co-researcher, Dr Linds. Looking for innovative but also accessible and appropriate media through which to explore our work within Image Theatre and storytelling, I suggested developing our paper in a play format, with a prelude, acts, scenes and entr'actes. The choice of journal was deliberate; Forum: Qualitative Social Research encourages innovation in research work that can be explored through an ICT medium. We were also keen to develop a performative approach to our work within a social sciences context and readers of the journal can interact with our paper through the entr'actes which invite dialogue and response (IT1, IT2).

5. Autonomy, accountability and working with others

In this section the focus is on competence in relation to autonomy, accountability and working with others. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 Outcomes:

- Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities (A1)
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others (A2)
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues (A3)
- Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence (A4)
- Deal with complex ethical and professional issues (A5)

There was no Principal Investigator role allocated in this process, however, both authors/researchers took sole responsibility for their part in the study. I therefore designed, developed, implemented, assessed and evaluated the research data and experience myself (as did my colleague in Canada for his part in the publication). Although this process was a solo venture in terms of the design, the participants in my focus group were also taking on the part of co-researchers as the study evolved. In our publications, Linds and I talk about the idea of image maker as 'wrighter'; a person who constructs or builds 'crafting new modes of being and relating that which emerges through form.' (Linds and Vettraino, 2008: 3). This crafting enabled the participant-researchers to work on self-reflection and critical analysis of practice under my facilitation and guidance, leading them through the image and story creation as part of a solution focused approach (A1, A2, A3).

Ethical and professional issues within the research process arose right at the beginning. At the beginning of our publication I discuss the development of the group I worked with, highlighting the fact that the techniques we developed in the sessions '…would require introspection and self analysis.' (Linds and Vettraino, 2008: 6). Careful dialogue which explored the complexity of the issues within the image and narrative processes enabled the sessions to move forward without issue, each member of the group taking responsibility for their own story generation secure in the knowledge

that my experience and ability would contain the work (A5). My own critical self-reflection on the experiences that each session brought enabled me to ensure that the techniques and experiences were being appropriately developed in line with the participants' needs (A4).

Table 1 sets out the proportion of the work I undertook in relation to the different aspects of the research and publication process.

Table 1: Claimant's contribution to research and paper cited

Paper cited	**Percentage of contribution by author:**			
	Research design	**Data collection**	**Data analysis**	**Write up**
Linds, W. and Vettraino, E. (2008)	Claimant responsible for 100% of own research design. Processes agreed through discussion with collaborator	100% of own research data collection	100% of own data analysis. Collaborated with colleague on cross-analysis of data.	60%

REFERENCES

Boal, A. (1995) *The Rainbow of Desires: boal's method of theatre and therapy* London: Routledge

Boal, A. (2000) *Theatre of the Oppressed, third revised edition* London: Pluto Press

Brown, K. D. (1997) http://www.dent-brown.co.uk/new6psmintro.htm?67,17 , last accessed 19/02/09

Bruner, E. M. Ethnography as Narrative, cited in L. P. Hinchman and S. K. Hinchman (Eds) (1997) *Memory, Identity, Community: the idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences* Albany: SUNY Press, p264-280

Linds, W. and Vettraino, E. (2008) Collective Imagining: Collaborative Story Telling through Image Theater. In *Forum: Qualitative Social Research,* Vol 9, No 2, Art. 56

Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (2003). *Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework: SCQF Handbook.* Retrieved March 26, 2008, from the SCQF Website: http://www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/Handbook%202004.pdf

Jindal-Snape, D. and Vettraino, E. (2007) Drama Techniques for the Enhancement of Social-Emotional Development in People with Special Needs: Review of Research, in *International Journal of Special Education,* Vol 22, No: 1, p107-117

Vettraino, E. and Williams, M. (2006) A Voice without Words: using art and drama techniques to enable children to 'say it how it is and make it better', conference paper, unpublished, presented at 'Learning from Children and Young People Conference', Stirling, 24-25 January 2006

Appendix 1

Key Indicators taken from SCQF Document – abbreviations used in text

1. **Knowledge and Understanding (subject or practice based)**

This section aims to demonstrate the systematic development of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or professional practice. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 learning outcomes and requires demonstration of or work with:

- A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts (KU1)
- A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms (KU2)
- Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline (KU3)

2. **Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding**

This section focuses on the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding to systematic enquiry in applied situations. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline (P1)
- Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms (P2)
- Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry (P3)
- Design and execute research, investigative or developmental projects to deal with new problems and issues (P4)
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices (P5)
- Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances (P6)

3. Generic cognitive skills

This section focuses on the development and application of generic cognitive skills. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues (G1)
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues (G2)
- Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues (G3)
- Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information (G4)

4. Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

This section focused on the need to demonstrate the development and application of a significant range of communication, ICT and numeracy skills. It relates to demonstration of the ability to:

- Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose (IT1)
- Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms (IT2)
- Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work (IT3)
- Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data (IT4)

5. Autonomy, accountability and working with others

In this section the focus is on competence in relation to autonomy, accountability and working with others. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 Outcomes:

- Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities (A1)
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others (A2)
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues (A3)
- Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence (A4)
- Deal with complex ethical and professional issues (A5)

APPENDIX D:

APEL Claim – Jindal-Snape, Vettraino, et al., 2011

Removed for copyright reasons

APEL claim for paper relating to primary-secondary transitions using drama 2008

1. Jindal-Snape, D. Vettraino, E., Lowson, A. and Macduff, W. (2008) Using Drama to Facilitate Primary-Secondary Transition, submitted for publication to School Psychology International

The aim of this part of the APEL claim is to justify that the research and publication undertaken was at doctoral level. I have submitted this in five sections to reflect the broad themes within the Scottish Curriculum and Qualifications Framework Level 12 doctoral level criteria (SCQF, 2003). Given that the descriptors used in the SCQF framework are intended to provide a general understanding of the learning outcomes required for each level, I have taken them to be a 'best-fit' comparison rather than assuming that every qualification will match all characteristics of each outcome. Abbreviations used are defined next to the key indicators in the main body of the text and also in Appendix 1.

1. Knowledge and Understanding (subject or practice based)

This section aims to demonstrate the systematic development of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or professional practice. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 learning outcomes and requires demonstration of or work with:

- A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts (KU1)
- A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms (KU2)
- Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline (KU3)

In response to these criteria, I will reference evidence relating to knowledge and understanding of the research and literature around drama as an

educational process and the use of process and issue based drama in developing confidence in transition experiences.

The Context

I have developed an interest in process and issue based drama connected with, in particular, the techniques within Theatre of the Oppressed pedagogical practice; Boal 2000. This interest has evolved through my past and present experiences as a teacher and teacher-educator; exploring the challenges and issues surrounding moving from the primary education to secondary education contexts have generated a great deal of debate and required considerable thought and attention on my part in terms of how best to facilitate the processes around this important time in a child's life. Through my work with reflective practice and drama as a therapeutic intervention I have developed a range of drama approaches to dealing with many of the issues that arise in this period for children. Since 1997 I have been extensively involved in work with the British Association of Dramatherapists, sitting on their Executive for six years as an Associate member and for ten years I was their Link Person for Scotland. As a lecturer at the University of Dundee, I have furthered my interest in the benefits of drama for educational development through collaborative ventures (Vettraino and Williams, 2006, Linds and Vettraino, 2008, Duffy and Vettraino, 2009) and have expanded on my initial experience of drama practice as a therapeutic tool to work with colleagues and students on the use of Image Theatre and collaborative story tackling issue based work with children in school settings.

I have presented widely on the use of Image Theatre and story as therapeutic interventions, in particular at the Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed conferences (these are international conferences based in North America particularly dedicated to this very specialised area of theatre practice) and National Drama conferences (National Drama is the professional organisation that supports general drama and theatre educators throughout the UK; their conferences are attended by national and international practitioners and theorists). I have also developed and delivered training programmes in relation to my work on image theatre and reflective practice in CPD for teachers and education practitioners, and as

part of the teacher education programmes (BEd Honours and PGDE Primary) at the University of Dundee for which I am the lecturer in Drama and Head of Expressive Arts. I have also developed a Masters level module for the new MSc in Child Care and Protection programme which is focused on therapeutic interventions for children and families.

Having a strong interest in the role of Image Theatre in developing reflective practice amongst student teachers working with transition periods, and also having a professional background myself connected with children and youth, I was motivated to collaborate with Dr Jindal-Snape in the development of an investigative study into the impact of drama approaches on children's thoughts of transition from primary to secondary. My focus for this work has been heavily influenced by educational dramatists such as Baldwin (2004), Neelands (2000, 2006) and Heathcote (1997) as well as the work of bell hooks (on the emancipatory practice of education) and Boal (on Theatre of the Oppressed). In addition I was keen to examine the place and purpose of a move towards using creative approaches, such as drama, to work with children in transition periods in light of the newly revised curriculum framework for primary and secondary children: the Curriculum for Excellence (information on this can be found at: http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence)

In 2007 Dr Jindal-Snape developed a reflective research study in consultation with me as a co-researcher, considering the views of drama workers and teachers who experienced drama approaches as part of the transition process moving from primary to secondary. To progress the study I applied my extensive knowledge and understanding of the literature and research around drama as a process took for educational development and focused on developing a clear literature basis for this in addition to supporting Dr Jindal-Snape where required in the data collection process. Evidence of my knowledge and understanding can be seen in the associated paper attached (KU1, KU3).

2. Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding

This section focuses on the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding to systematic enquiry in applied situations. It relates to the

following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline (P1)
- Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms (P2)
- Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry (P3)
- Design and execute research, investigative or developmental projects to deal with new problems and issues (P4)
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices (P5)
- Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances (P6)

The development and implementation of the research project drew on a range of skills and expertise linked to techniques and tools within the fields of education, transition and educational and social/political drama approaches. The research was centred around the participants and to some extent an ethnographic approach was taken which focused on the narratives that the participants within the study held. Semi-structured interviews were generated that allowed for a freedom of response which was then collated into themes and key shared concepts (P3, P4).

3. Generic cognitive skills

This section focuses on the development and application of generic cognitive skills. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues (G1)
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues (G2)

- Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues (G3)
- Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information (G4)

The ability to critically analyse and explore the experiences and narratives of the participants involved in the study (both from primary and secondary data sources) is evident in the publication attached; as is the ability to synthesise the information collected in the specific contexts – within the spaces that the drama work took place, within the drama workers' base etc to produce a detailed examination of the complexities involved in working through transition processes within education settings (G1). Creative and innovative insights into the individuals' practice were also offered, connecting quite abstract ideas with concrete experiences for the participants (G2).

4. Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

This section focused on the need to demonstrate the development and application of a significant range of communication, ICT and numeracy skills. It relates to demonstration of the ability to:

- Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose (IT1)
- Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms (IT2)
- Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work (IT3)
- Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data (IT4)

The paper produced as a result of the study undertaken was a collaborative venture which engaged a range of experiences in relation to communication of ideas. As a contribution to my part of the data analysis and literature exploration, I developed a high level of debate and dialogue around the issues of transition and the benefits of dramatic approaches with the Principal Investigator (Dr Jindal-Snape) and with practitioners in the educational drama field (IT1, IT2). In the writing up of the associated paper, I was also keen to

ensure that the readers could engage in the critical debate that was generated by the narrative approach to the study.

5. Autonomy, accountability and working with others

In this section the focus is on competence in relation to autonomy, accountability and working with others. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 Outcomes:

- Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities (A1)
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others (A2)
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues (A3)
- Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence (A4)
- Deal with complex ethical and professional issues (A5)

Dr Jindal-Snape adopted the Principal Investigator role allocated in this process, however we took joint responsibility for the development of the literature and the write up of the paper. Although the writing process was shared between us, the drama workers involved in the study were also taking on the part of co-researchers as the study evolved (A1, A2, A4).

Ethical and professional issues in relation to the sharing of narratives within the research process arose right at the beginning. These issues were discussed and careful dialogue explored the challenges that might be faced by data collection, particularly in relation to the secondary data which came from children working with the drama practitioners. This careful discussion and planning enabled the process to move forward without issue, each member of the research group taking responsibility for self (A5).

Table 1 sets out the proportion of the work I undertook in relation to the different aspects of the research and publication process.

Table 1: Claimant's contribution to research and paper cited

Paper cited		Percentage of contribution by author:			
	Review of literature	**Research design**	**Data collection**	**Data analysis**	**Write up**
Jindal-Snape et al. (2008)	Review of publications and literature relating to educational drama and socio-dramatic techniques (50%)	Discussed data collection approaches with the PI Claimant responsible for 10% of research design	10%	50%	50%

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Appendix 1

Key Indicators taken from SCQF Document – abbreviations used in text

1. **Knowledge and Understanding (subject or practice based)**

This section aims to demonstrate the systematic development of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or professional practice. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 learning outcomes and requires demonstration of or work with:

- A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts (KU1)
- A critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms (KU2)
- Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline (KU3)

2. **Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding**

This section focuses on the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding to systematic enquiry in applied situations. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline (P1)
- Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms (P2)
- Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry (P3)
- Design and execute research, investigative or developmental projects to deal with new problems and issues (P4)
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices (P5)
- Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances (P6)

3. Generic cognitive skills

This section focuses on the development and application of generic cognitive skills. It relates to the following SCQF Level 12 outcomes and requires demonstration of the ability to:

- Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues (G1)
- Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues (G2)
- Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues (G3)
- Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information (G4)

4. Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

This section focused on the need to demonstrate the development and application of a significant range of communication, ICT and numeracy skills. It relates to demonstration of the ability to:

- Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose (IT1)
- Communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms (IT2)
- Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work (IT3)
- Critically evaluate numerical and graphical data (IT4)

5. Autonomy, accountability and working with others

In this section the focus is on competence in relation to autonomy, accountability and working with others. This relates to the following SCQF Level 12 Outcomes:

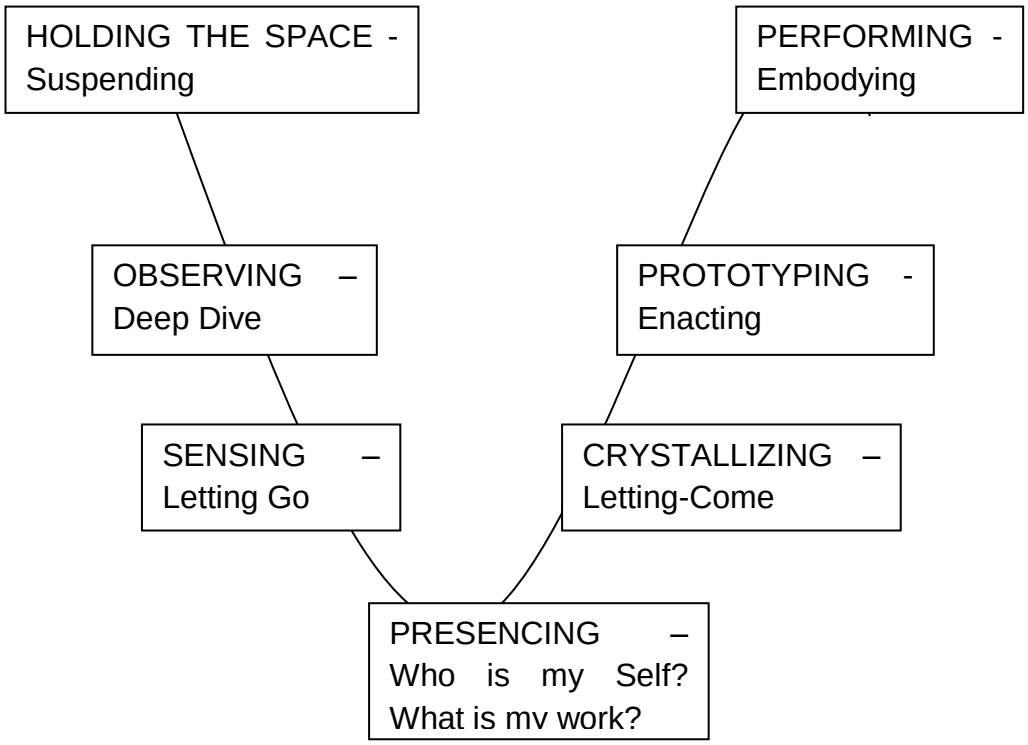
- Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities (A1)
- Take full responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others (A2)
- Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues (A3)
- Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence (A4)
- Deal with complex ethical and professional issues (A5)

APPENDIX E:

'Theory U' Explained

In 2007, Otto Scharmer published his text *Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges* in which he set out to define the development of leadership for the 21st century that focused on understanding the connection between head, heart and will. Theory U offered leaders a framework from which to find creative ways of working collaboratively with others using a common language to communicate the process of creative engagement. Scharmer identified a number of leadership capacities (see Figure E:1 below) that could be developed through a process of digging into and then emerging from a co-creation process which arguably connects very evidently to reflexive working (Scharmer, 2007; Sutherland, 2012).

Figure E:1 – The 7 Leadership Capacities



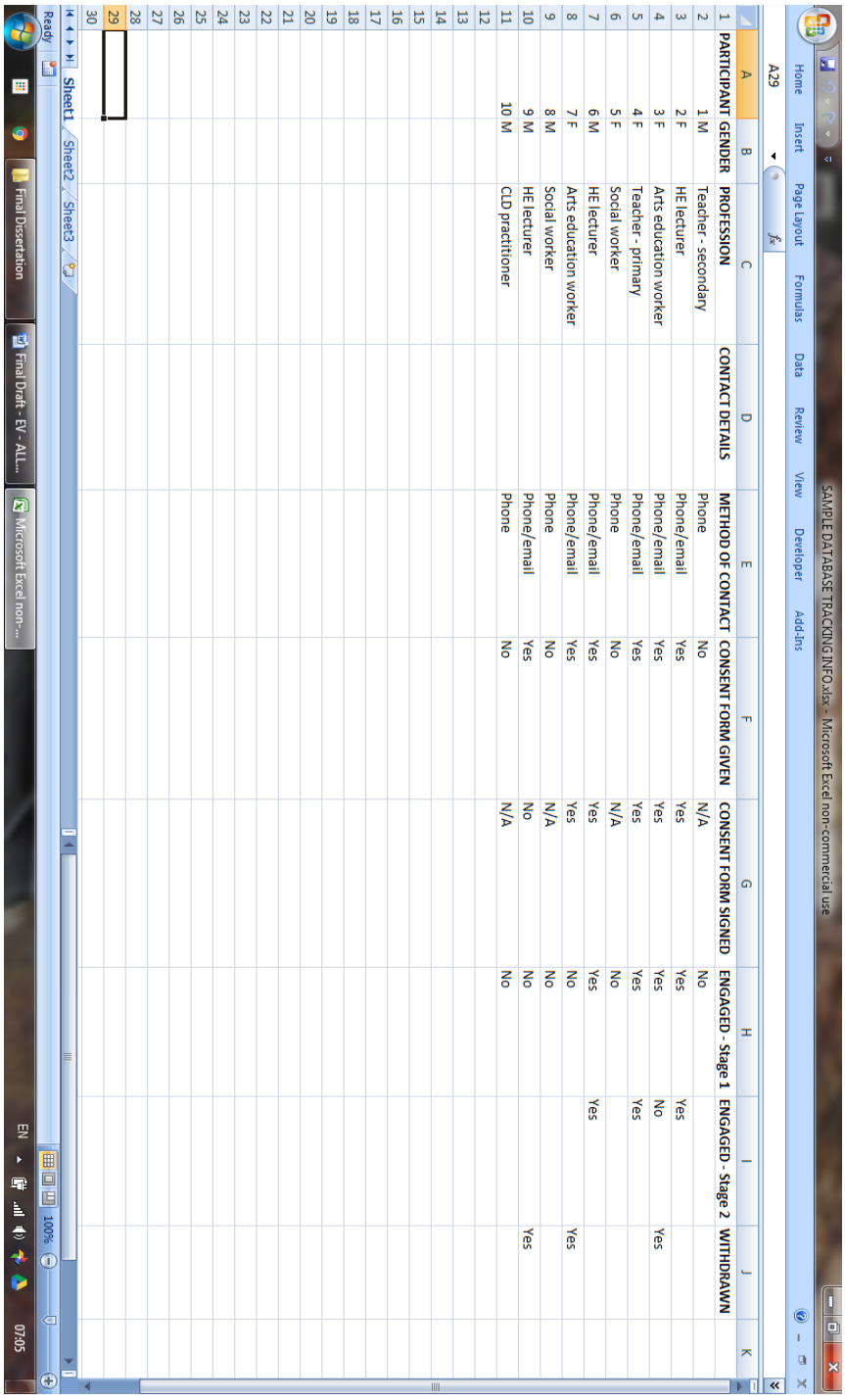
Scharmer's (2007) model focuses on the concept of Presencing – occurring at the bend of the U – which can be defined as a combination of being fully present and therefore open to new knowledge through the senses (Sutherland, 2012). 'Presence' can be defined as a heightened level of attention which allows individuals to make an internal shift in terms of their knowledge base. This is combined with an understanding of 'Sense' as being the ability to see deeply and collectively with others to create openness to emerging future possibilities. Presencing, therefore, is the ability to be fully open to emergent, co-created new knowledge and ways of knowing.

Linking the concept of Theory U to reflection and reflexive practices, there is a strong connection between the concept of letting go, openness to emerging ideas and then embodying the new knowledge and understanding. Sutherland (2012) has made those links in relation to aesthetic and sensory awareness developed through active learning experiences that map to reflexive action. There are also synergies between the stages identified in Scharmer's leadership capacities model (see Figure E:1) and Isaacs' (1999) concept of the Dialogue Diamond which focuses on participants suspending their own judgements and beliefs, and listening respectfully in order to ensure that any intervention voiced comes from a place of openness to learn. Fundamental to both Scharmer's (2007) and Isaacs' (1999) theories, therefore, is the quality of listening that is demonstrated by the participants in the approaches. This is also the case with storytelling and sharing and the reflexive possibilities that emerge from those processes.

APPENDIX F:

Sample Information

The table below gives information about the participants who engaged in the doctoral research process as well as some information about those who were approached but did not engage in the process.

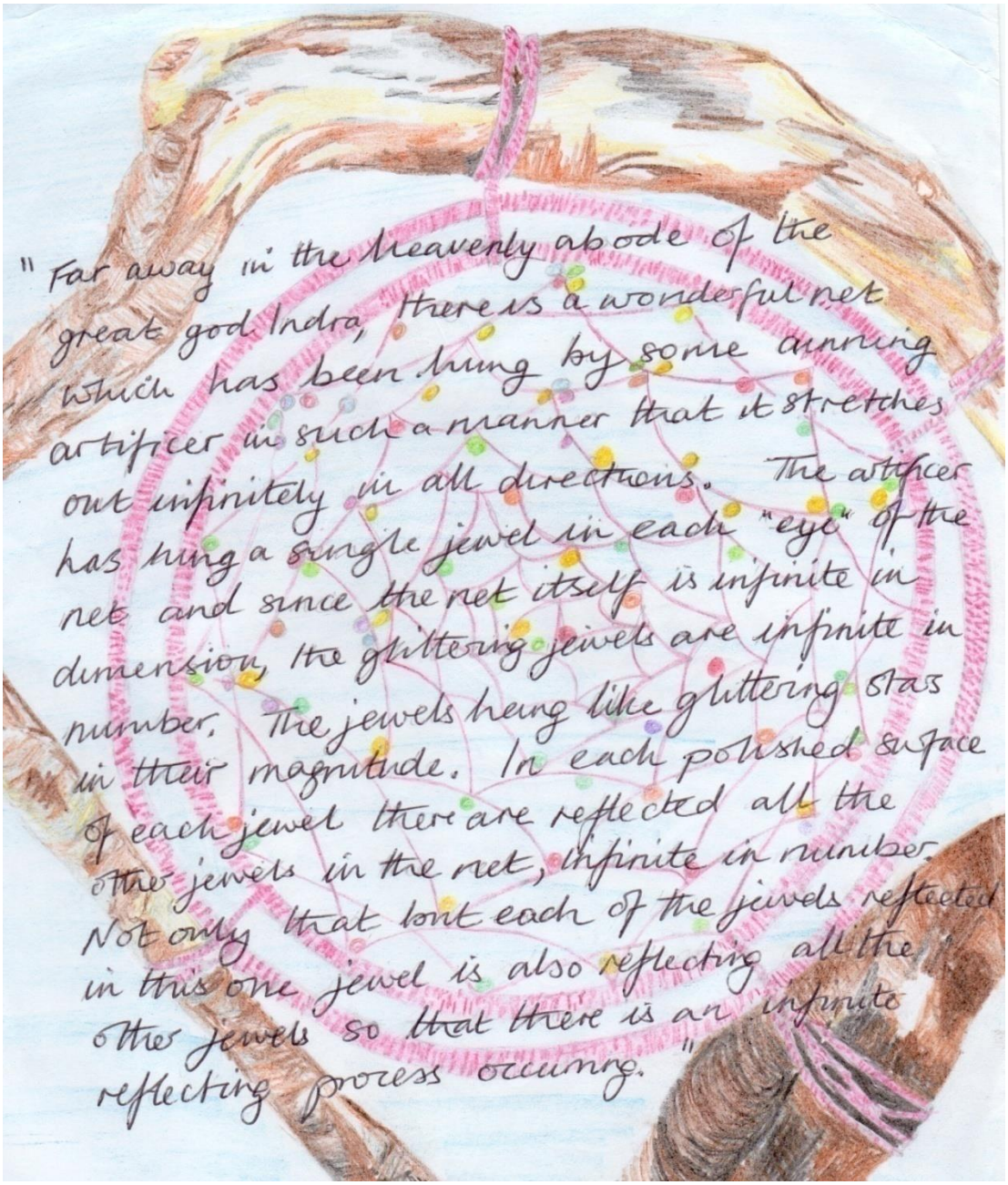


PARTICIPANT	GENDER	PROFESSION	CONTACT DETAILS	METHOD OF CONTACT	CONSENT FORM GIVEN	CONSENT FORM SIGNED	ENGAGED - Stage 1	ENGAGED - Stage 2	WITHDRAWN
1	M	Teacher - secondary		Phone	No	N/A	No		
2	F	HE lecturer		Phone/email	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
3	F	Arts education worker		Phone/email	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4	F	Teacher - primary		Phone/email	Yes	Yes	Yes		
5	F	Social worker		Phone	No	N/A	No		
6	M	HE lecturer		Phone/email	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
7	F	Arts education worker		Phone/email	Yes	Yes	No		Yes
8	M	Social worker		Phone	No	N/A	No		
9	M	HE lecturer		Phone/email	Yes	No	No		Yes
10	M	CLD practitioner		Phone	No	N/A	No		

APPENDIX G:

Indra's Net

The image below is from my research collage described in Chapter 3, kept as a way of storying thoughts, ideas and connections during the process of the research journey. The version of Indra's net described in the image is from Loy's (1993) discussion.



APPENDIX H:

Image/Picture Cards used in the Study

Removed for copyright reasons

APPENDIX J:

British Sociological Association – Ethical Guidelines

Below I have copied the sections from the BSA ethical guidelines information located at: http://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/27107/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf?1463845934575

Relations with and Responsibilities towards Research Participants

10) Sociologists, when they carry out research, enter into personal and moral relationships with those they study, be they individuals, households, social groups or corporate entities.

11) Although sociologists, like other researchers are committed to the advancement of knowledge, that goal does not, of itself, provide an entitlement to override the rights of others.

12) Members should be aware that they have some responsibility for the use to which their data may be put and for how the research is to be disseminated. Discharging that responsibility may on occasion be difficult, especially in situations of social conflict, competing social interests or where there is unanticipated misuse of the research by third parties. Relationships with Research Participants

13) Sociologists have a responsibility to ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by the research. They should strive to protect the rights of those they study, their interests, sensitivities and privacy, while recognising the difficulty of balancing potentially conflicting interests.

14) Because sociologists study the relatively powerless as well as those more powerful than themselves, research relationships are frequently characterised by disparities of power and status. Despite this, research relationships should be characterised, whenever possible, by trust and integrity.

15) In some cases, where the public interest dictates otherwise and particularly where power is being abused, obligations of trust and protection may weigh less heavily. Nevertheless, these obligations should not be discarded lightly.

16) As far as possible participation in sociological research should be based on the freely given informed consent of those studied. This implies a responsibility on the sociologist to explain in appropriate detail, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be disseminated and used.

17) Research participants should be made aware of their right to refuse participation whenever and for whatever reason they wish.

18) Research participants should understand how far they will be afforded anonymity and confidentiality and should be able to reject the use of data-gathering devices such as tape recorders and video cameras.

19) Sociologists should be careful, on the one hand, not to give unrealistic guarantees of confidentiality and, on the other, not to permit communication of research films or records to audiences other than those to which the research participants have agreed.

20) Where there is a likelihood that data may be shared with other researchers, the potential uses to which the data might be put must be discussed with research participants and their consent obtained for the future use of the material.(iv). When making notes, filming or recording for research purposes, sociologists should make clear to research participants the purpose of the notes, filming or recording, and, as precisely as possible, to whom it will be communicated. It should be recognised that research participants have contractual and/or legal interests and rights in data, recordings and publications.

21) The interviewer should inform the interviewee of their rights under any copyright or data protection laws

22) Researchers making audio or video recordings should obtain appropriate copyright clearances

23) Interviewers should clarify whether, and if so, the extent to which research participants are allowed to see transcripts of interviews and field notes and to alter the content, withdraw statements, to provide additional information or to add glosses on interpretations

24) Clarification should also be given to research participants regarding the degree to which they will be consulted prior to publication. Where possible, participants should be offered feedback on findings, for example in the form of a summary report.

25) It should also be borne in mind that in some research contexts, especially those involving field research, it may be necessary for the obtaining of consent to be regarded, not as a once-and-for-all prior event, but as a

process, subject to renegotiation over time. In addition, particular care may need to be taken during periods of prolonged fieldwork where it is easy for research participants to forget that they are being studied. In some situations access to a research setting is gained via a ´gatekeeper´. In these situations members should adhere to the principle of obtaining informed consent directly from the research participants to whom access is required, while at the same time taking account of the gatekeepers´ interest. Since the relationship between the research participant and the gatekeeper may continue long after the sociologist has left the research setting, care should be taken not to compromise existing relationships within the research setting

26) It is, therefore, incumbent upon members to be aware of the possible consequences of their work. Wherever possible they should attempt to anticipate, and to guard against, consequences for research participants that can be predicted to be harmful. Members are not absolved from this responsibility by the consent given by research participants.

27) In many of its forms, social research intrudes into the lives of those studied. While some participants in sociological research may find the experience a positive and welcome one, for others, the experience may be disturbing. Even if not harmed, those studied may feel wronged by aspects of the research process. This can be particularly so if they perceive apparent intrusions into their private and personal worlds, or where research gives rise to false hopes, uncalled for self-knowledge, or unnecessary anxiety.

28) Members should consider carefully the possibility that the research experience may be a disturbing one and should attempt, where necessary, to find ways to minimise or alleviate any distress caused to those participating in research. It should be borne in mind that decisions made on the basis of research may have effects on individuals as members of a group, even if individual research participants are protected by confidentiality and anonymity.

29) Special care should be taken where research participants are particularly vulnerable by virtue of factors such as age, disability, their physical or mental health. Researchers will need to take into account the legal and ethical complexities involved in those circumstances where there are particular difficulties in eliciting fully informed consent. In some situations proxies may need to be used in order to gather data. Where proxies are used, care should be taken not to intrude on the personal space of the person to whom the data ultimately refer, or to disturb the relationship between this person and the proxy. Where it can be inferred that the person about whom data are sought would object to supplying certain kinds of information, that material should not be sought from the proxy.

30) Research involving children requires particular care. The consent of the child should be sought in addition to that of the parent. Researchers should

use their skills to provide information that could be understood by the child, and their judgement to decide on the child´s capacity to understand what is being proposed. Specialist advice and expertise should be sought where relevant. Researchers should have regard for issues of child protection and make provision for the potential disclosure of abuse.

APPENDIX K:

British Association of Dramatherapists – Code of Practice

Although I am not a Dramatherapist, and the research study was not intended as any form of Dramatherapy intervention, cognisance was taken of relevant elements of the BADTh Code of practice to ensure that all areas of ethical consideration had been given to the study. The relevant sections considered are below, the full Code of Practice can be accessed at: https://badth.org.uk/code#therpurp

Confidentiality

Generally, information received from the clients should be treated as privileged and confidential both during and following the completion of therapy.

However, there are circumstances in which information must be shared with other people or organisations outside of the therapy relationship. The client should be informed that communication of confidential information is permissible in the following circumstances:

- in discussion with the Dramatherapist's supervisor, co-therapist or supervision group;
- with other professionals related directly to the case/care of the client;
- when a group member has reason to believe that a breach of professional conduct has taken place and intends to inform the regulating body;
- when the therapist considers that the client, another individual or group of people or society at large is deemed to be in danger of serious harm;
- when the client is deemed by the therapist to be at serious risk from self harm;
- when the practitioner is aware of child protection issues being raised in the course of the therapy, even though the therapist may not have direct contact with the child;
- when a court order to reveal information is issued. Failure to provide information may place the practitioner in contempt of court.

The client's specific consent will be sought for:

- using case material for publication, teaching or broadcasting. Publications must be presented in a way that preserves the client's anonymity. (if the client is unable to provide informed consent, the practitioner must obtain consent from a designated guardian or other person able to speak on the client's behalf) In the case of visual recordings material must be pre viewed by clients prior to distribution. Participants must have the right to edit, modify or delete any material in which they appear. Consent may be withdrawn at

any point. Legal advice should be sought for instances of public broadcasting of sessions.

- conveying information to the client's family, employer or any other organisation, agency or person seeking information.

Boundaries

Dramatherapists should be aware of professional boundaries with all clients. Role awareness is of paramount importance in the therapy relationship. Under no circumstances should a sexual relationship be formed with a client or ex client. Social contact with clients should be avoided.

Boundaries can be compromised when the dramatherapist has a dual relationship with someone they are working with. A dual relationship exists if, for example, a client is referred who is known socially to the dramatherapist or if a former client asks for supervision, having themselves trained as a therapist. Any such dual relationships should be discussed in supervision and the results of the discussion recorded before the dual relationship is either proceeded with or terminated.

Dramatherapists providing therapy for trainee Dramatherapists should not have contact with the trainee in any other role connected with the training. It is acknowledged that the therapist and trainee client may come into contact with each other during events organised by BADth. This area should be discussed during the contracting period.

The working environment should comply with health and safety standards. The therapy space should be adequately sound proofed and provide a level of privacy compatible with a confidential therapy relationship.

When working with children, the dramatherapist may be required, by some organisations, to work in a room or space where there is a viewing window at adult height so school staff/managers may see them at work. This is to protect the safety of the work, the child and the dramatherapist.

All artefacts or written material created by the client during the course of therapy should be treated as confidential and stored in a secure container between sessions. Clients may choose to keep or destroy some items at the end of the therapy. These choices must be recorded in the therapist's notes. Items remaining in the therapist's care should be stored for the same period as notes.

Dramatherapists ensure that they do not use their professional relationships with clients to satisfy their own emotional needs.

Clients should be informed of any aspects of the therapy that might affect the client's participation.

APPENDIX L:

Participant Agreement Letter

The use of the 6-Part Story Method in the reflective practice of leaders: perceptions and experiences

Dear Participant

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with me, the researcher.

The purpose of this doctoral level study is to develop an understanding of how leaders perceive and experience the use of a story telling approach known as the 6-Part Story Method, to reflect on their practice. The process will be developed through a Grounded Theory model primarily with participants' perceptions and experiences being considered at different phases throughout the programme of intervention.

Data collection will take place during the sessions that we will have as part of the Active Imagining group. This group is due to meet once every four weeks from October 2011 through to April 2012, however there will be two additional meetings in October and November 2011 to bring the group together. The focus of these sessions will be developing the use of the 6-Part Story Method as a reflective practice technique and this will involve engaging in a range of drama/theatre techniques as part of the story telling process. Additionally, all participants will be engaged in one-to-one discussions about their understanding of leadership and reflective practice. The 6-Part Story Method will be explained during an introductory discussion with participants and the process will be explored from the second group session onwards.

Participants will be given resources to devise a story themselves which will be brought back to subsequent sessions with the group. Participants' stories will be shared at these sessions and observations and questions will be invited. After these sessions, the story teller will be interviewed in relation to their perception of the impact of the experience on their identity as leader. In addition, an online community will be created and all participants will be asked to share their experiences as each session and subsequent work unfolds. As well as working on the group's stories, the group will be asked to work on stories from remote tellers who have been involved in the research through a virtual link. Their stories will be

told by me as the researcher and the group will be asked to give observations and questions as well as enact the story to be shared back with the teller. Each participant's narrative around the perceptions and experiences of the 6-Part Story Method will form the basis of the research and interviews with the group and with individuals will occur throughout the period of the study.

Data collection methods will include video and audio recording (video and audio tapes of the story telling sessions as well as the discussions), documentation (e-mails, online entries and/or journal entries relating to leadership and reflective practice), interviews (transcripts of interviews between researcher and participants and between participants) and the researcher's own observation and research journal notes. Please note that images from the work carried out may be used for research articles and also in my final dissertation/submission. If you are not comfortable with this, please indicate at the bottom of the letter that you do not wish your image to be used in this way.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time that you are participating. I am also happy to share my findings with you after the research is completed. However, please note that your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way.

There are no known risks and/or discomforts with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are an enhanced understanding of yourself as a leader and reflective practitioner and a shared and individual understanding of how leaders experience the 6-Part Story Method in relation to reflection on practice.

Please sign your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the procedure. A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

Elinor Vettraino
Principal Investigator
elinorvettraino@adamsmith.ac.uk
[redacted]

APPENDIX M.1:

Researcher's Journaling Collage

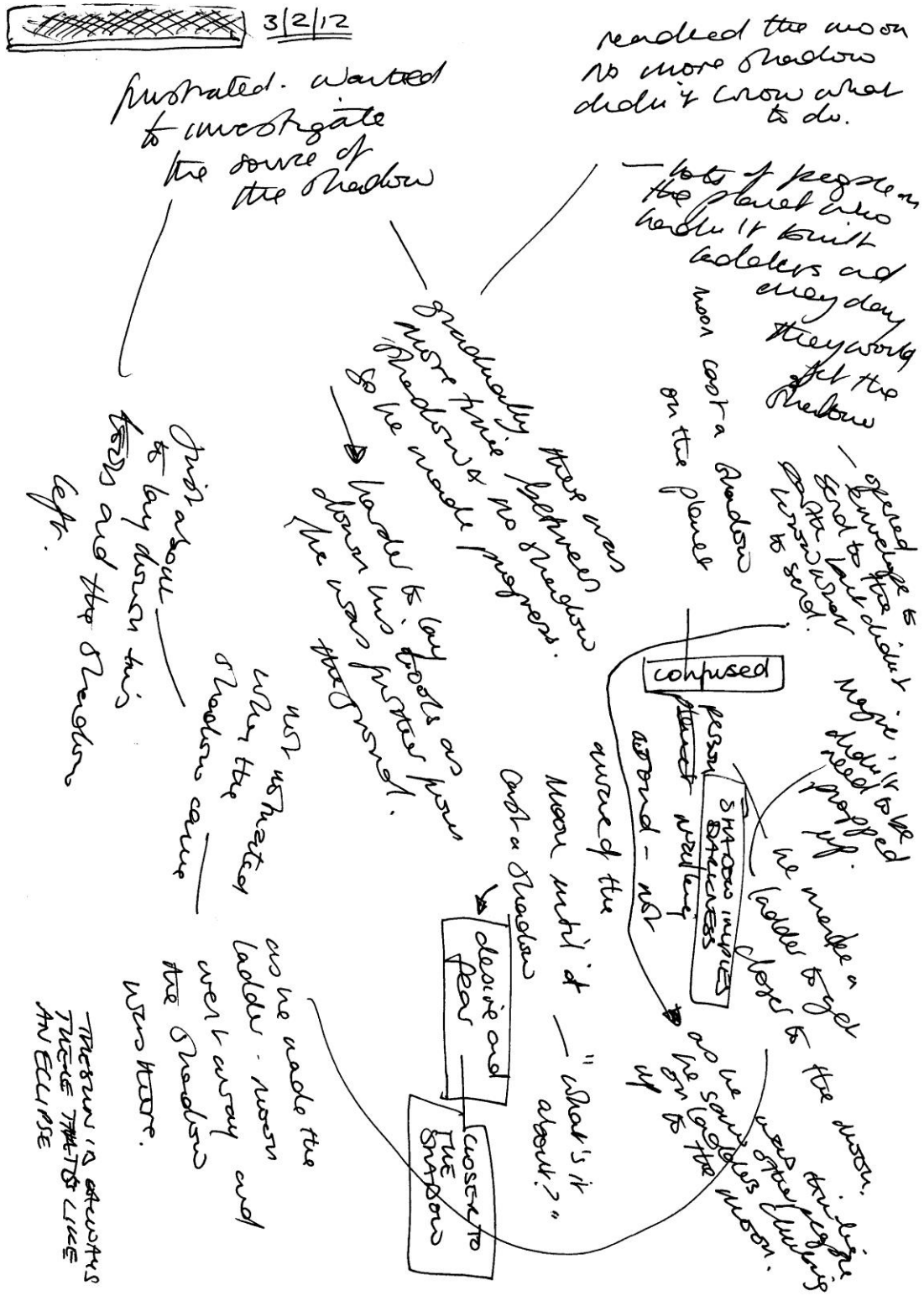
As part of my process as a researcher I adopted a visual method of recording my thoughts, feelings, ideas and actions in relation to the emerging study. Elements of these have been extracted over the following pages to indicate my emerging process. All names or identifiers have been blacked out to ensure confidentiality.

<u>Where is this going?</u>

Some conversations really early on into my research process helped me to try and shape the direction of travel. This image is my interpretation with a colleague of moving from a whole piece to the component parts. I had a lot of questions! What am I actually doing? What is the direction of travel and so on?

Practicing the process

My thought process here was about how to really 'hear' what the participants were saying. I was able to practice the process with a colleague and the focus for me with this story was to really capture the complexity of my colleague's voice.

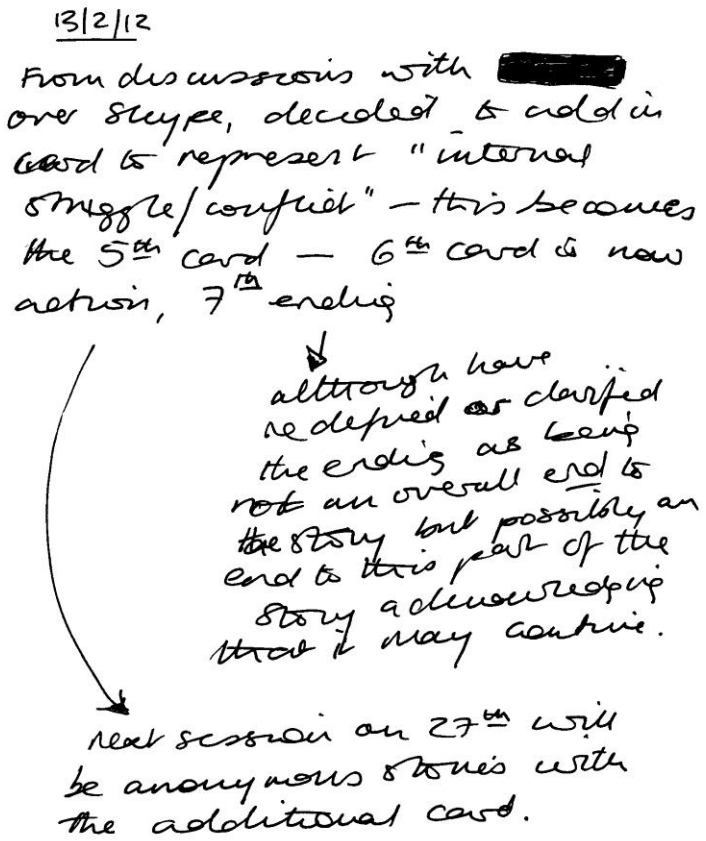


Making sense

This image was working through with all the participants during VS6 how things might have moved or changed for individuals within the story process. It captures for me the messiness of the initial stages of trust building and vulnerability.

Experimenting

Adding in a seventh card came about because of a conversation during one of the sessions that focused on the need for some way of understanding the internal struggle. The notes here are about my working that through in conversation with a colleague and deciding to add in another card to the process to see what occurred.



I also had a number of discussions with colleagues outside of the university who helped me to think through my process and also other ideas I was having about where this research might lead. Some of these are captured in the discussions shown below.

Discussions with [redacted] (2nd August 2011)

I met with [redacted] and [redacted] on August 2nd. I wanted to ask [redacted] about the viability of designing some form of computer program (?) that would enable participants of my study to engage with the 6PSM virtually. I had the idea of a 'solitaire' type program where the picture cards I'm using for the study could be in the system and participants would click on the back of a card to turn it over, thus forming the 6PSM method. Whilst we did discuss this, we actually talked about a lot more and the discussion was extremely useful.

[redacted] made me really think about the size and manageability of my study. I have been trying really hard to construct a robust and valid study and actually I have potentially created something that will be unmanageable because of the complexity of it. The idea of the 'solitaire' program was, in essence, the last straw/marker for this. [redacted] believed that this would not only be complex to generate but also would detract from my study. He asked me to consider whether I wanted to do a face-to-face study or a virtual one; I want to do a face-to-face one primarily. Focusing on this would therefore be more sensible and manageable than trying to achieve both.

Essentially I agree with [redacted]. He helped me to really think about what I *needed* to do as opposed to necessarily what I *wanted* to do in an ideal world and I know that he's right; focusing on one group is a sensible think to do. I also had concerns about whether focusing on one group of only potentially 7 or 8 people would be enough but he talked me through the idea that I had around the research and he believed that focusing on this and perhaps highlighting two or three individuals as case studies within the group would be achievable and offer enough information.

My idea about looking at the international connection somehow he felt I could incorporate into the study without making it a central feature of the work and I am definitely going to keep that as a possible line of enquiry because I think it would be incredibly useful to go through that process.

Since this discussion took place I have read more about different approaches to research in qualitative fields and also have had a chance to think more about what I want to do. I still agree with the localised group but I also feel that there is a real place for individual work, either virtually or face-to-face, with other participants. The more I have read the more clear I am becoming that my research will take the form of a grounded theory study in some form – I have yet to read specifically about constructivist grounded theory and this may be more suitable. Because of this I am

also becoming clearer that my focus is not necessarily the process of the study as I had originally envisaged – eg: 6PSM, dramatising and change, implementation through IT – but instead could be focused on the idea of myth/fiction creation as a way of learning about self as leader through the 6PSM. Would dramatising the process of this enable a greater degree of reflection and deeper learning and therefore change? Very possibly – and here I am acknowledging my bias – but not necessarily. And that's part of what I want to investigate.

Fundamentally I agree with [redacted] that I need to keep this manageable though so I have to be aware of not taking on too much in relation to the study itself.

My thoughts about my focus for the research also grew and developed as I worked through the study. For example, I had originally intended to focus on leaders within educational practice but changed this later on in the study.

Defining my area of study (15th August 2012)

Because I feel I'm sort of doing this all in reverse – starting with the research and then building the literature – I've been quite anxious about what I'm actually trying to study. So, using an old drama questioning technique I've been thinking…..

Things I know for sure:

- The 6-Part Story Method is a therapeutic tool which enables dramatherapists (and others) to analyse a client's situation and then look at how that situation might be best 'fixed' (although that's not the right word, am quite tired!)
- It originated with Mooli Lahad and Ofra Ayalon in Israel and the UK simultaneously
- Although 6PSM was 'pioneered' by Lahad and Ayalon, it had roots in work done by Alide Gersie and Nancy King who created a story making format SET
- Kim Dent-Brown has researched the robustness of the technique within clinical care and the field of dramatherapy and potentially psychotherapy
- When I worked with the 6PSM with the individuals from [redacted], it appeared to have a profound impact on each of them in different ways and I'm interested in this impact
- Leadership is a complex term because it involves so many different and often oppositional roles
- Good, professional practitioners reflect on their own practice in order to ensure that they learn and there are many ways to reflect on practice, some of which are connected to storytelling approaches

Things I think I know:

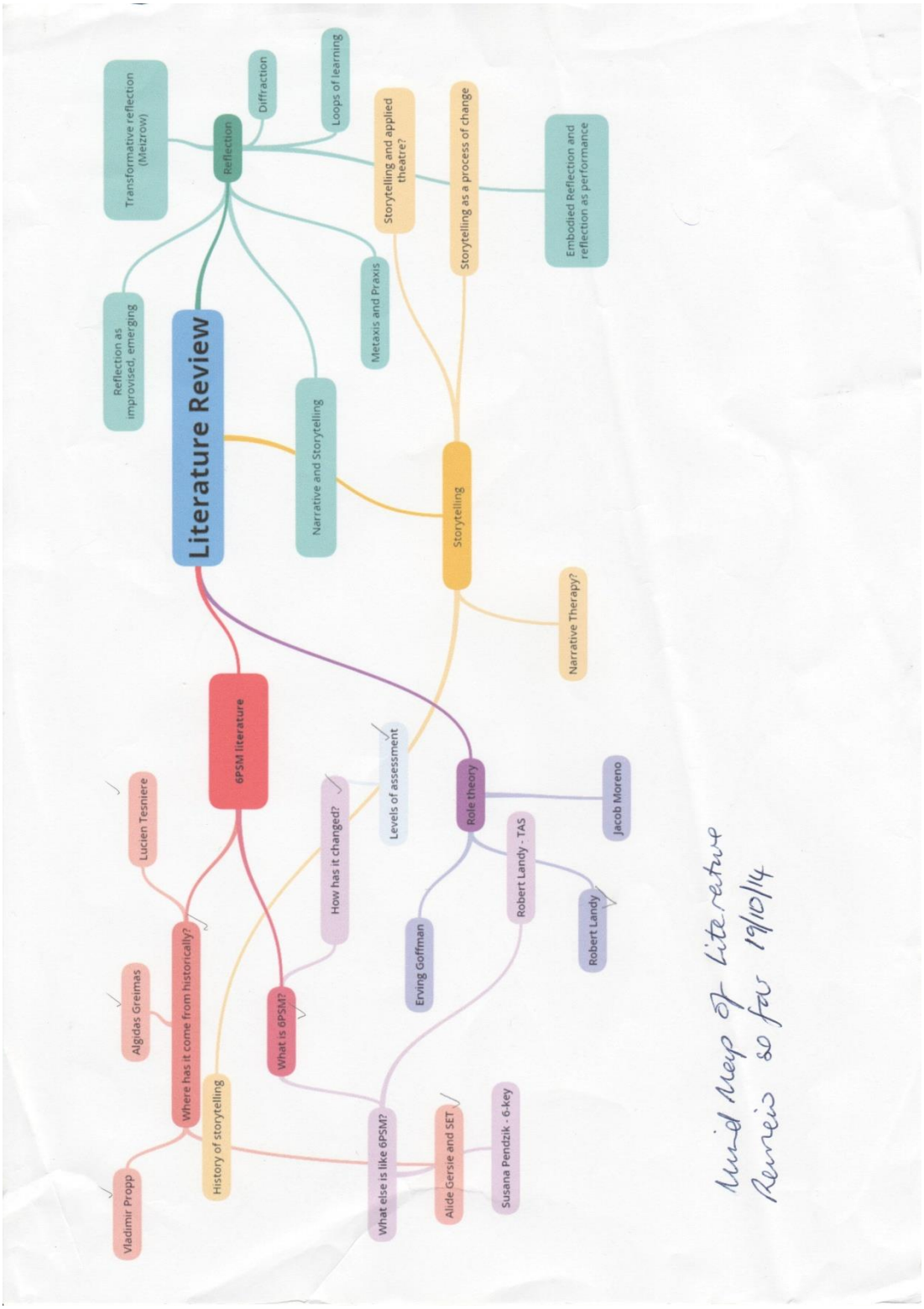
- That the individuals from the [redacted] project were changed as a result of working with the 6PSM approach as part of a wider drama programme
- That physicalizing the story telling process was important to their understanding of themselves and therefore how changes could be made so the drama connection is quite important
- Good, professional practitioners reflect on their own practice in order to ensure that they learn
- The 6PSM could be a really important and useful tool for reflective practice with leaders in different contexts because of the fictional element of the process – the fact that there is a degree of distance for the teller
- The fictionalisation of personal story enables the teller to be open and truthful about their own experience of a particular situation. It also makes it easier for participants to share back because of the degree of distance that fictionalising a story brings – they are not responding to the teller but to the story

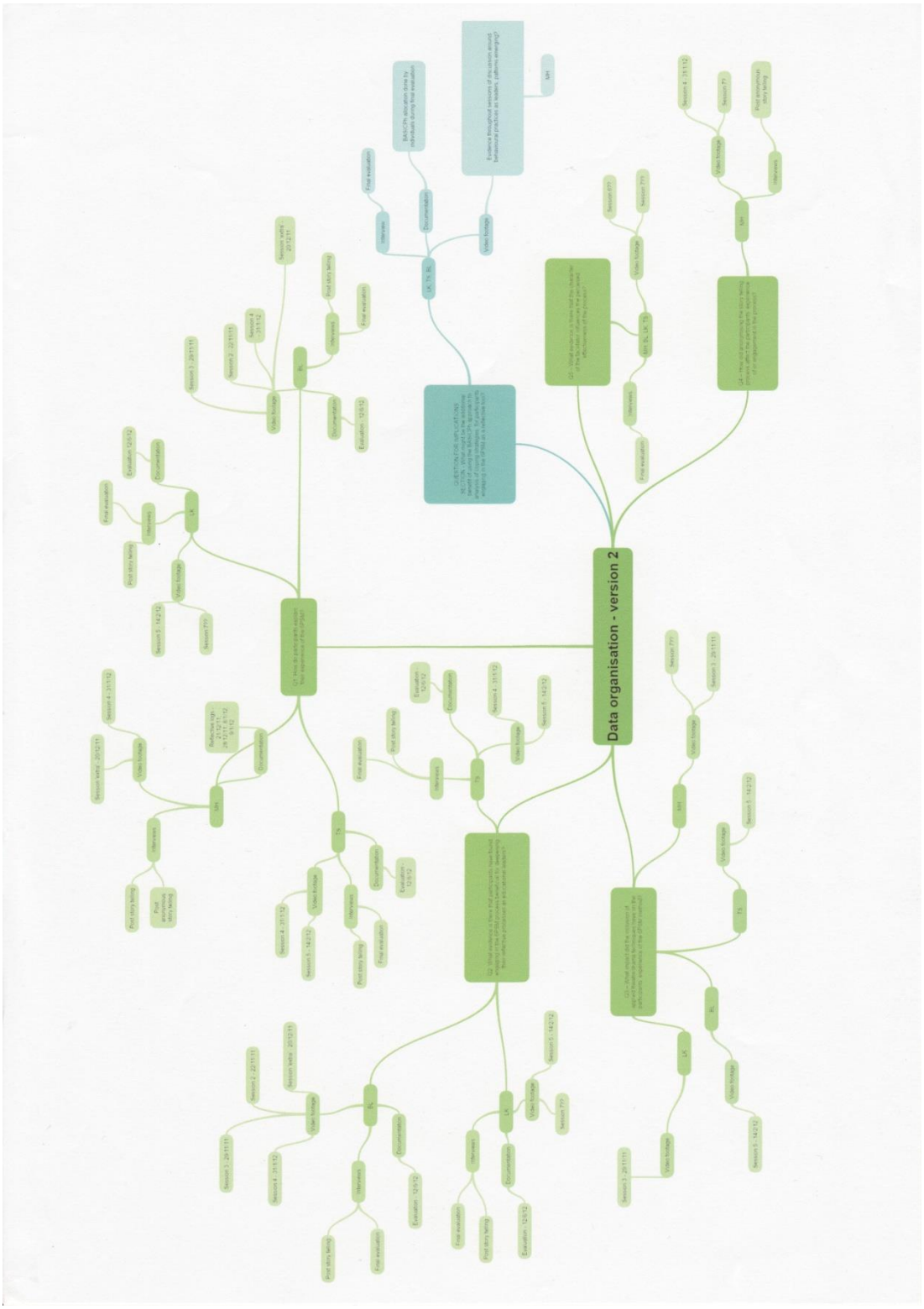
Things I need or want to know:

- How do individuals experience the 6PSM in a reflective context?
- How does working through the process of fictionalising a personal story and dramatising this impact on their understanding of their practice as leaders?
- Is there a model of practice in relation to this approach that will work effectively as a reflective tool for leaders?
- How do participants experience the process of reflection with 6PSM without dramatising the story?

Developing my knowledge base

As my research progressed, I recorded the development of my knowledge base in a variety of ways, mostly visual, as can be seen by the two mind-map diagrams here.

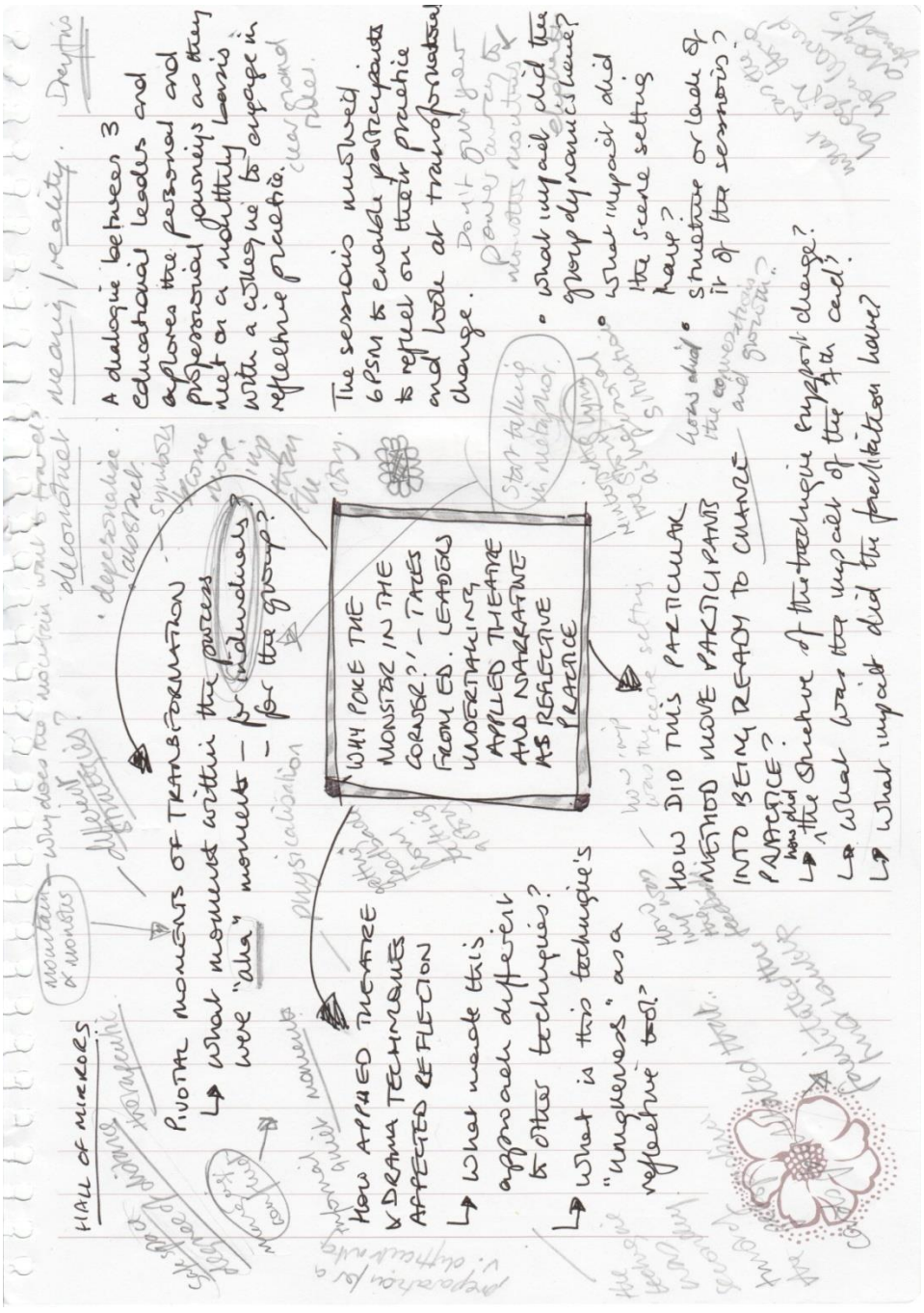



Data organisation - version 2

APPENDIX M.2:

Mind-Map of Interim Data Results

Just before Stage 2 of the research, I captured my thoughts about what the data was telling me in relation to the research question I had identified. I created the mind-map shown below as part of the process of understanding the data. The paler notes were added during Stage 2.



APPENDIX N.1:

Participant A (P:A) – Story

From the beginning of time Libra knew only freedom. How she loved the feeling of freedom, not being tied! Just light and airy – floating over the rest of her kingdom, looking down with kindness.

Libra has many forms but the feather symbolises her the best. Years passed for Libra and during that time she travelled through many different lands and met many kinds of different creatures. Mostly she understood the creatures even though they seemed very different to her.

One day when she was tired of flying high above the earth, Libra was drawn to the ground. She had floated into a forest filled with trees, so closely packed together that very little sunshine managed to break through the tightly formed trunks and branches. Libra saw a very small creature that at first she did not recognise because it was so well camouflaged. Only when it spread its wings did Libra see it was a ladybird. She should have recognised it immediately because of its bright red colour and distinctive spots. This ladybird was unusual in that it had an extra spot on its back.

Libra approached the ladybird and said how pleased she was to see another living creature in such a gloomy wood. The ladybird didn't speak, didn't even acknowledge Libra's presence. Libra couldn't understand it. They were the only two living creatures in the wood and still the ladybird refused to even look at Libra, never mind talk back. Libra persisted hopefully, not understanding why this little creature was being so uncommunicative. Surely it should be glad to have someone to talk to.

Suddenly without warning, the ladybird turned to face Libra and from the seventh spot on its back shot a stream of noxious, horrible gunge. This slimy liquid stuck to Libra's feather and made every filament stick together like

glue. Libra tried to float but couldn't. She was bound to the hard, unfriendly ground of the forest floor. The ladybird spread its wings and vanished. Darkness fell and Libra struggled to free herself from the gooey gunge that bound her to the forest floor.

Early next morning she heard what sounded like thunder. It was in fact footsteps and the crashing of something mechanical. Libra heard them talk about science and research and the good of mankind. It became clear that they were intent on taking precious plants and herbs from the forest. Strange, Libra had not seen anything of value in the forest, only decay and darkness. Once the people started cutting and chopping Libra felt uneasy. Although she couldn't float away, she knew that she must somehow stop these people.

The people were so intent on what they were doing that they did not hear or notice Libra. She tried in vain to make them stop and listen. For the first time Libra experienced a feeling of heaviness and cursed her fragility. She wished suddenly that she could be something more substantial than a feather, and tried to remember how she could do that. In despair, Libra fell still and was prepared to accept her fate – an inconspicuous object lying helpless on the ground, unheard, unseen, unnoticed.

As she lay there Libra became aware of a wind blowing softly around her. It was familiar and caressed her gently. As hope flooded she grew strong again. A tear fell – it was raining – rain that fell all over her releasing each particle from the gunge until she was free again. She lay slightly unbelieving that she could fly again, when a raindrop seemed to grow and swell until it seemed like a huge beautifully shaped balloon. Libra clung to the raindrop and was carried high into the sky. She knew that the raindrop would not last long once it had left the forest and so she drew on all her courage, closed her eyes and let go.

When she opened her eyes again Libra saw that she was still floating high above the forest. She felt sad that the people were still in the forest robbing it of all its precious jewels. Libra knew in her heart that she couldn't stop them but decided that when she travelled over the next kingdom she would have to adopt a different form, a different shape, something that the people would listen to.

APPENDIX N.2:

Participant B (P:B) – Story

The girl in the cage has chosen to be in this cage. She perceives the external environment to be threatening. She has placed herself high up in the air and she sees herself above everyone else around her.

The task is for me to help the girl come out of the cage and come down from being up on high. The challenge is to try and move this person to a different island. The eye is a really helpful thing as it sees things widely and is wise.

The skull is my perception of being stuck or dead in my thinking, being rigid and unable to move. As opposed to a face which is soft tissue, it can move, a skull is fixed and that's my threat – it's around my own fixed and rigid view.

The action is how the tree that is living and breathing can breathe some new life into this skull so that it can think and be in a different way. The fire is the energy that is generated through this action of using the eye and the tree to help move the skull. So it could be all consuming or cleansing depending on whether the skull is prepared to make the shift.

APPENDIX N.3:

Participant C (P:C) – Story

The mountain character is a mixed up character. It has been there forever, it is very fixed in its ways, very resilient and impressive. But the mountain is not going anywhere.

Near the mountain is an angry sea. This is the sea the mountain has to get across but how will the mountain manage that? The mountain is stuck thinking: “how do I get across this? It doesn’t look good at all.”

The mountain looks up at the fluffy clouds. “There’s something there about blowing problems away, driving you forward”, thinks the mountain. “Clouds are nice to look at, they give me hope, something to look forward to. A vision,” thought the mountain.

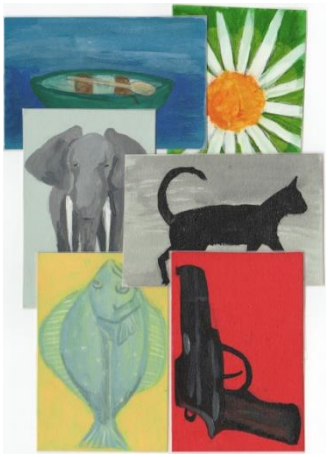
There is a deer that is a hindering force. That flummoxes the mountain, it feels that this is counter-intuitive, “I like deer, what am I seeing here?” thought the mountain. “I think that the things that help me *really* help me,” thought the mountain. In this situation, the mountain felt that the deer was proud, aloof and stayed away from other deer. The mountain felt scared of the deer, as though it was a resistant force.

As darkness turned into light, the mountain felt a sense of hope. Things always seem worse in the middle of night but things can change really quickly.

With hope the mountain goes forward but there was still a lot of challenge to come. The mountain thought about how big his challenge was and how he would get through it, there seemed to be nothing but a big pile of evacuated semolina at the end!

APPENDIX N.4:

Participant D (P:D) – Story



There was once a boat. They were a strong character and had been around for a long time. They were very helpful and they lived near an island with lots of animals.

The boat had been on a long journey and she knew a lot of things. The animals on the island used to often ask the boat for help.

One day, the wise elephant approached the boat and told it that it would have to change and be something else, maybe even go and live on the land. The boat was very sad about this but the elephant gave the boat advice:

“It is not a bad thing, to change, it can be good.”

Now, although the elephant was wise, it was a young elephant – it had taken over when the older elephant died – and it didn’t know all the animals on the island. In particular, it didn’t know about the cat.

The cat went to the elephant and said it wanted to be the boat and that’s why things had to change.

The cat thought that if it became the boat it would have all the knowledge the boat had, but it didn’t.

So, the boat changed. It didn’t go onto the land, instead it became a fish as a compromise. Most of the animals still went to it seeking help and the cat was not happy about this. So the cat complained to the elephant who went to see the fish.

The elephant told the fish that it must try to help the new boat (the cat) and so the fish tried, but the new boat didn't want any help. Instead the new boat did things wrong and then pretended it was the fish that had done them.

The fish was so unhappy that it decided it didn't want to do this anymore. It decided that it would leave the island and go somewhere new, to other things.

APPENDIX O:

'John' – Story

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STORYTELLER

'John' is from Finland, English is not his first language but he wanted to tell the story in English. John is a senior leader within an educational establishment in the West of Finland. We met through a European project and he was very interested in the research I was doing into reflexive practice using the 6PSM method. He asked if he could go through the process of creating and telling the story. Over the period of a week, he created a story and then told it to me and to a colleague of his who had also asked to tell a story. John's story became a focus for understanding the technique during the formative sessions in Stage 1 of the study and the participants actually played back his story which he was able to see and comment on.

There was once a feather, not named yet but something really serious happened when she was part of a seagull…..

OK, there was a boat full with people and they were in the sea. Somebody took the oar and they reached up and hit the seagull, and then it was that the seagull crashed and fell down to the boat dead.

One feather survived.

After a while the feature realised 'OK, I'm not a seagull……I am a girl in a cage', this was the real meaning of her situation. She now realised 'I am in

jail! They put me in jail!' She had a lot of questions: 'am I still alive? Maybe, I don't know. Am I a feather or am I still the seagull?'

The girl sat in her private jail for many, many hours, many, many days, many, many years, who knows? Then something happened. She realised that she was not alone in the world. The ugly people from the boat took the jail or bird cage, outside the building and she realised she was in a farm.

There was a deer in the farm and he came across to her. They discussed a lot of things:

"Who are you?" asked the deer, "what are you doing here?"

"I don't know," replied the girl, "maybe I think that I was flying in the wind in the sea but I don't know. Something happened and I am here. So I don't know anything else, that's my life."

The deer and the girl discussed and discussed. Eventually the deer opened the cage door – he was amazing because he could do everything! – so he opened the door and then she found something really amazing happened.

A ladybird that was in the garden, flying about, came to talk with her. They talked and talked, and started playing in the garden. The girl was running and running and soon something happened. The deer gave the girl one feather and the girl said:

"Oh, I think I have seen this before."

The girl put the feather on her body and soon she found out that she was a seagull again and she started flying with the ladybird, away.

APPENDIX P:

Practitioner X – Story

A man was standing on the Earth minding his own business in the sunshine. He was a happy man; however, suddenly a shadow crossed his path and he became very unhappy and not motivated to move. Then the sun returned and he started moving again. This happened every day of his life.

One day, he was so happy he was jumping for joy. Then, suddenly, the shadow came across his path as he jumped across it. For a brief moment, he was between happy and sad and in that moment he decided he would remember the joy but also to investigate why the sadness.

The next day, as soon as he got up, he went to find a ladder that he would use to find the source of the shadow that disrupted his happiness. All he knew was that the shadow came from above him, so that is why he chose a ladder and not a shovel. The only ladder that was available was one with very, very long extensions. He also found a tool box with a bunch of hammers, saws, winches and screwdrivers because maybe he would need to fix something up there.

He began to climb the ladder and got about 100 metres in the air, before swoop, swoop the shadow returned. He stopped climbing and even descended a little bit. The shadow passed over him for slightly less time than when he was on the Earth. Hmm, he said, maybe when the shadow is gone I can climb higher and see if the shadow spends any less time over me as I climb.

So the shadow passed and he kept climbing. Another day passed and the shadow then passed over him in less time. Hmm, so my supposition is

correct….as I get higher, the shadow is smaller. If I get to the top of this ladder, there will be no shadow.

This indeed became the case. As he climbed higher and higher, there was less and less shadow to trouble him and cause him to pause, or even descend the ladder.

So he arrived at the top and there was no shadow.

At that moment, he looked far far down to the Earth he had left. There were other people prancing about, jumping up and down and then suddenly he the shadow over them and they seemed to be frozen in the spot. He became quite discouraged. After all this work, it seemed only he had moved! What could he do? Perhaps send them a letter some of them could read where all his exploits and hopes could be shared?

Then his view widened. There were in fact other ladders around him. On them he saw other people below him climbing up.. Then he looked up and saw other people above him. In fact, he saw people on the moon above the Earth, who were walking to the other side of the moon where they might be able to see something new.

APPENDIX Q:

Games and Conventions used

A number of games and conventions in drama were used in many of the sessions in order to stimulate activity, engage physically with the space and each other, and to breakdown anxieties or tensions. The primary games and conventions used during the sessions are detailed below:

Flying

The purpose of this game is to build trust.

Participants are in twos or threes, standing side by side as A, B and C. B stands with eyes closed, with arms raised in front and bent (as though sitting with armrests) and A and C, eyes open, take hold of B's arms and wrists gently. Still with eyes closed, B is moved around the space by A and C who guide B around obstacles, going forwards, backwards, diagonally and side to side. A and C should also talk to B to reassure them of what is happening, where they are in the room and so on. If B is uncomfortable at any point, they should say stop. A and C should stop on that command, allowing B to open their eyes, check in with where they are and then resume the activity once they are secure. The pace should be slow at first but as confidence grows, the person in the middle should feel comfortable enough to run around the space.

Lead the Camel

The purpose of this game is to build trust

Participants are in pairs, A and B. A stands behind and facing B. A places their hands on B's shoulders. B closes their eyes and A leads B around the space by gently pulling or pushing their shoulders to know whether to go right or left, stop or go. As before the pace should be slow to start with.

Lead the Camel with a Twist

The purpose of this game is to build trust

As before, participants are in pairs, A and B. A stands to the right of B. A places the index finger of her left hand under the chin of B. B has eyes

closed and A leads B around the space keeping the connection under the chin at all times.

Lead the Camel variations can also include getting the person who is ‘blind’ to lead the process even though they have their eyes closed. This creates very interesting dynamics around power, control, leadership and responsibility.

Cross the Room

The purpose of this game is to develop team building, and understand leadership processes

In teams (or a team) participants have to cross the room from one side to the other but with constraints. For example, participants can be given the following objects to carry/transport:

- Glass of water – which must always be carried
- Sheet of A4 paper
- Chair
- Rubbish bin
- Umbrella

They can also be told that everyone needs to cross the room together, no one can touch the floor and so on. The idea of the exercise is to see how they work as a team to combat the restrictions in place, and also to see how they can use creative thinking to ‘bend’ the rules.

Vampire Tig

One of Augusto Boal’s (2003) exercises, Vampire Tig is about listening to what we hear.

Participants stand randomly in the space with their eyes closed. The facilitator moves among them and taps a number (maybe 4 out of 30) on the shoulders. Those who are tapped become vampires and must hold their arms up, bent at the elbows making their hands into claws in front of them, poised to grab another person’s shoulders. Those who have not been tapped are the ‘victims’. All then move around the space with their eyes closed. When a vampire comes across a victim, the vampire grabs them gently by the shoulders from behind and the victim should let out a blood curdling scream! The victim then becomes another vampire. If a vampire grabs another vampire, the vampire being grabbed should let out a moan and

either stop being a vampire and become a victim, or just carry on as a vampire.

Stop and Go

The purpose of this game is to get physically moving around the space, I also use to begin storytelling processes.

Participants stand randomly in the space, eyes open. On the instruction go, they all move in whatever way they want, around the space. When the facilitator calls ‘stop’, participants all stop exactly as they are, no change in movement. When the instruction is given to ‘go’ again, participants move off in a different direction and with different movement. The facilitator can add restrictions/constraints to the action eg: each time you pass someone you find your body is physically being pulled towards them, like gravity, and you find it difficult to move on.

My variation to this game is that after a few times of calling stop and go, I call ‘stop’ once more and then look in the space for interesting physical shapes that could be connected. I ask those people to stay as they are and the other participants become an audience with the job of trying to decide what story is being told or what the shapes they see represent. This can then be built on to add another image and another until you have a beginning, middle and end of a story.

Tableaux/Still Image

This convention is about being able to build dramatic pieces as photographs or still pictures in time. Normally there is no movement and sound in a tableaux, although a variation of this would be to add both in.

Participants work in pairs, groups or as a whole group to create a still picture normally connected to a theme that they have been given or that they chose. Their job is to try and convey the theme or story with their bodies but without speech or movement, like taking a photograph. The image created becomes a snapshot of time.

Sculpting

This convention is similar to tableaux but is more focused on exploring and performing abstract ideas or concepts, such as different emotional states. I have adopted Jo Fox’s approach to creating group sculptures, shown to me during a workshop at the International Playback Conference in York, 1999.

This process is very structured and offers a useful framework for developing a group piece.

Participants are given, or choose, a theme eg: anger. One person (A) steps up to become the first piece in the group sculpture. They physically depict their understanding of anger through their body and hold it as a still, unmoving image. The remaining participants consider this first image and then one of them (B) steps up and creates a different image that represents their idea of anger. B then joins this image with A's. The process continues until all participants in the group have joined the image with their representation. Then, as it was constructed a piece at a time, the process is reversed with the last person into the sculpture stepping out and standing back, then the next and so on until the first person (A) remains in the original position. After a few seconds that person then steps out and stands back.

Handshake Sculpt

This exercise can be a good way of bridging the gap between sculpting and still image/tableaux, as it asks participants to think about both reality and abstract conceptualisation.

Two participants, A and B, create a basic handshake image where they face each other, each with an arm extended to shake the other's hand. They stay still and participants watching are invited to suggest who the two people might be in the picture, what they might be doing and so on.

The facilitator then asks A to stay exactly as they are and B to sit down. Now the image is no longer two people shaking hands so what else could it be? The facilitator invites the other participants to suggest possibilities and then to come and join the image now offered (one person with their arm extended) as though they were part of the picture. For example, a participant might stand in front of 'A' and pretend to be holding a door open for them. Another might go down on their hands and knees in front of 'A' and pretend to be a dog being walked by 'A'. Once participants have got the idea, they pair off and try to find as many variations of the image as they can, starting from the original handshake sculpt.

APPENDIX R:

Image Theatre and Applied Theatre

In the 1970s Augusto Boal developed a theatre movement in his native country, Brazil, that has reverberated around the world over four decades after its creation. The Theatre of the Oppressed movement was born out of deep social, economic and political unrest. A military coup in 1964 ousted the civilian president Joao Goulart, followed by a decade of violent repression during which physical torture against 'marginals' or activists was common place.

Augusto Boal developed theatre processes and practice as a direct combatant to this repressive regime. In his seminal text *Theater of the Oppressed* (1973/1979) Boal states:

> *"I also offer some proof that the theater* [sic] *is a weapon. A very efficient weapon. For this reason one must fight for it. For this reason the ruling classes strive to take permanent hold of the theater* [sic] *and utilize it as a tool for domination. In so doing, they change the very concept of what "theater" is. But the theater [sic] can also be a weapon for liberation. For that, it is necessary to create appropriate theatrical forms. Change is imperative."* (Boal, 1979, p.ix)

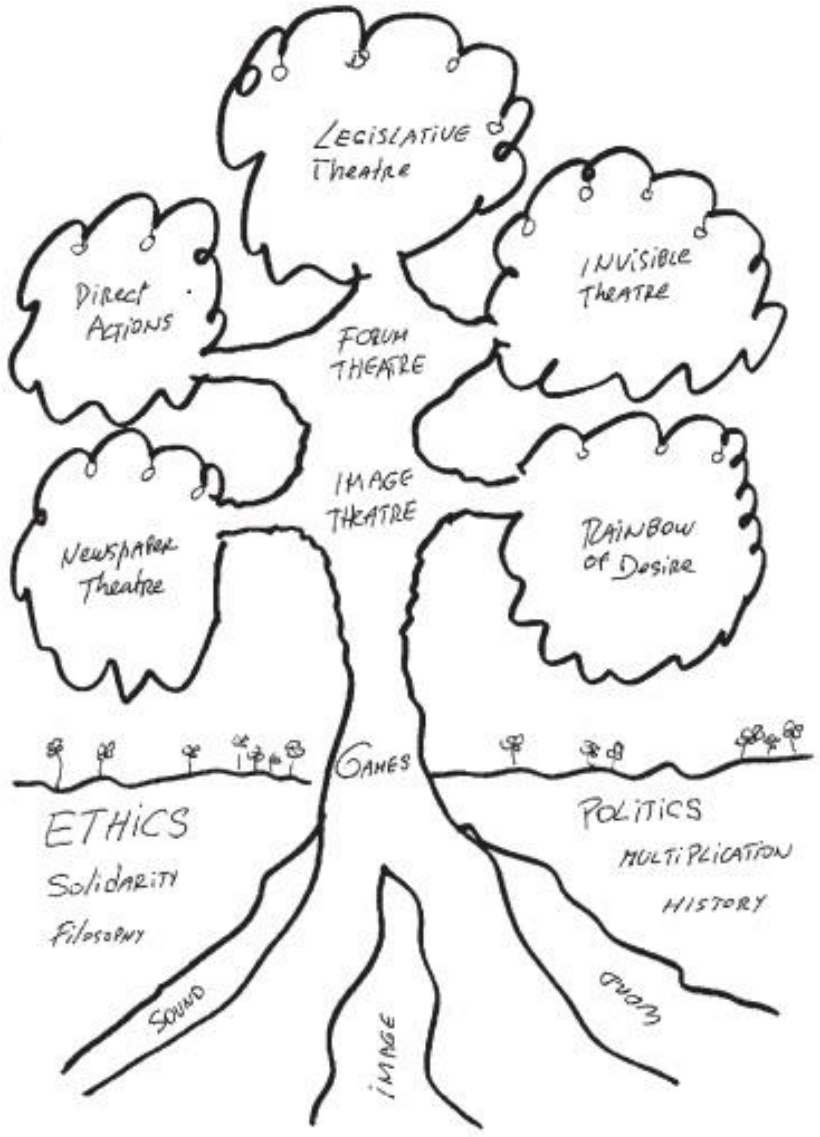
Boal's call to arms has been taken up in countries around the world by individuals and groups who explore political, social, economic (and many other forms of) oppression through the processes that Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) offers. The processes within TO have been explained visually by Boal himself in one of his last texts before his death (see Figure R.1). In his TO tree, Boal identifies the main elements of TO work that make up the body of processes. The trunk of the tree highlights the three core elements of TO work; games, Image Theatre and Forum Theatre.

Image Theatre formed a central part of the work within this study. The power of this form of theatre process lies in the non-verbal nature of the technique. The body is used to explore ideas, feelings, thoughts and action, without the added language of words. Verbal language carries with it history and power dynamics that can create separation rather than connection, the latter being the focus of Boalian techniques; it is theatre of *the* oppressed, not theatre of *the one* oppressed.

In Stage 1 of the study, participants explored the stories created and shared through a number of Image Theatre techniques. These included

some of the games already highlighted in Appendix Q such as the Hand-Shake Sculpt,

Figure R.1: The TO Tree (Boal, 2006, p.3)



Tableaux/Still Image and Sculpting. In these techniques, the participants used their bodies to create images that the others could 'read' based on their own life experiences and their understanding of the issues being portrayed. By doing this, the participants were adding to their existing knowledge base, reflexing in the moment to adapt and assimilate new knowledge.

Another vital tenant of Boal's work underlines the importance of the audience as active participants in the theatre process, rather than as passive observers. Heavily influenced by Bertolt Brecht's participative approach (Brecht, 1964), Boal built further on this by creating the concept of 'spect-actors' rather than spectators. Instead of the audience and actors being

separated by the line between stage and auditorium, Boal broke down that barrier by creating performances where the audience was compelled to enter the stage and change the dynamics being played out. As Boal stated:

> *"we need to invade! The audience mustn't just liberate its Critical Conscience, but its body too. It needs to invade the stage and transform the images that are shown there."* (Boal, 1979, p.xx)

Image Theatre techniques enabled the participants to be free from the constraints of explaining their choices within the aesthetic space. Without needing to verbalise their actions, the participants were able to attribute their own meanings to their spect-acting.

Alongside the use of Image Theatre, there were a number of other Applied Theatre techniques used to support the participants' process. Again, in Appendix Q a number of games have been described that lend themselves to Applied Theatre work – the trust building exercises for example, which can be, and were, used to explore the beginnings of stories and the ability to take risks, trust and so on.

In a similar way to the evolution of the TO movement, Applied Theatre gained momentum in the UK as a response to the harsh economic and political situations within the 1980s and 1990s. Towards the early 2000s, Applied Theatre also began to gain prominence in the Higher Education sector with a number of university programmes developed with Applied Theatre as a focus. The fluid way in which this area of theatre work has developed has led to a broad range of definitions. Thompson (2003) makes the point that the term Applied Theatre is much like a net, cast wide over a number of different elements which are drawn together to create a range of ways of understanding the term. Thompson further states:

> *"[applied theatre] is a useful phrase for a theatre that claims usefulness. It is imperfect. It is a term cast in different places, and therefore it will catch different practices according to the theatre histories of the places from which it is thrown."* (Thompson, 2003, p.xv).

The journal Applied Theatre Researcher defines Applied Theatre as: "theatre and drama in non-traditional contexts." In the context of this study, the TO techniques used along with other Applied Theatre work were not delivered within a traditional theatre context, and instead were developed to explore the needs of educational professionals to reflexively work with their own learning.

Examples of specific techniques used

Image of the Images – Boal's introspective method taken from his 1995 text The Rainbow of Desire. This technique required the participants to

individually create images of the stories heard using the other participants as objects/subjects within those images. A non-verbal technique, participants were invited to step out of the still sculpts/images created and verbally offer observations of what they saw and thought they saw – the objective and subjective. The creator of the images offered no response to the observations but instead was able to internalise new knowledge and then offer a reflection on the process at the end of the sessions.

The 3 Wishes – another Boalian technique evolving from Image Theatre. Having created an image that was uncomfortable or represented an oppressive situation drawn from the stories heard, participants were offered 3 wishes to transform the image physically. This meant that they could move themselves or another person in order to create some form of transformation. The process was not straight forward, within most participants opting to move someone else rather than themselves, therefore being left in uncomfortable or oppressive positions. This illustrated that the process of transformation is often messy and cumbersome.

Characterisation – an Applied Theatre technique that explores the development of character through the use of either 'role on the wall' – where a blank head is drawn into which participants can put suggestions for friends, family, work etc that will build the character – or, as in our case, verbal character development that took the participants from the abstract characters created from the image cards to a real world situation.